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# INDIA'S SECURITY ENVIRONMENT

## PART II—INTERNAL THREATS

BRIGADIER YA MANDE

### INTRODUCTION

**A**LL the countries of the world, in principle, suffer both from external and internal threats. It will generally be seen that developed countries have overcome the problem of internal threats, whereas the developing countries suffer from both the threats, and in many cases it is difficult to determine which one is graver. Destabilisation is a game played by external powers, but the seeds of destabilisation are present in the developing societies for different reasons peculiar to each and unfortunately they are unable to overcome them.

India is not only a huge country, but it is also multi-racial, multi-lingual, multi-religious and multi-cultural. There are seven hundred million people inhabiting the country whose poverty by the Western standards is appalling. Politically, the country has chosen democracy which demands a great sense of responsibility both from the leaders and the people. Now, such a country, particularly in the nascent stage of development, will face many problems but every problem is not a threat. Threats are those problems which endanger integrity of the country and its cultural ethos.

India occupies a unique position in the third world. Its ideal of neutrality and non-alignment are shared by many developing countries. The developing world has human aspirations very akin to ours. The problem simply stated is—can a developing world stand on its own feet and live with dignity? After all the poor have always fought with each other and hence they are wretched! It is in this context that Indian stability is important, which may act as an example to the developing world.

The general opinion in our country is that of optimism, we will pull out. How far are we right and on what basis? In this article, we examine internal threats under social, economic and political headings concluding with the prospects for stability.

### SOCIAL THREAT

The country faces many social problems but the threat is that of communalism whose roots are present in the religions. Vivekanand distinguished three separate contents in any religion, namely philoso-

phy, rituals and mythology. Now, philosophy is a vital part of any religion; it gives religion an ideological base and satisfies intellectual curiosity. If religions are to propagate only their philosophies, there would hardly be any cause for conflict as the essence of all religions is the same. God is one—He is love, truth, perfection, all-powerful and so on. However, religious philosophies, important as they are, do not guide the lives of common men. People are governed more by rituals.

It is rituals which differentiate one religion from the other. The births, deaths, marriages, various ceremonies and festivals are conducted by religions in different ways, and to a common man, this is what differentiates his religion from those of others. According to sociologists codes, customs and conventions are important. In their absence we would not know what to do when a child is born, how to greet when two people meet, how to perform marriages with dignity, what to do when a man dies and so on. Now, all codes, customs and conventions are not necessarily religious. The inaugural address by Presidents and Governors, Oath taking ceremonies, playing of national anthem, unfurling of national flags, standing up when a dignitary enters, clapping after a cultural performance etc. are some of the common examples of secular rituals. In social life, one can count innumerable rituals; they exist because they are necessary. What is not commonly known is that rituals are prior to religions. The religions have adapted them and modified them to give them their own identity. Winter festival and Esther (after a Persian deity) was always celebrated, the Christians have only adapted them as Christmas and Easter. The festival of lights and colour in India is older than Diwali or Holi. The festival of Bihu in Assam was always celebrated, Shankaradeo only gave it a religious significance.

The rituals are based on geographical facts and historical experience. Muslims in Arabia could not possibly have taken to cremation by burning because of lack of wood. The Christian practice of burial is very understandable; it possibly could not have been otherwise and hence there is nothing very Christian or Muslim about burial. We should also note that whereas the religious philosophies remain unaltered, the rituals vary from place to place. The Kashmiri Muslims do not have mosques, the life style of Indian Muslims and those of South East Asia is very different from the birth place of Islam; does it mean that the oriental Muslims are inferior or renegade? Hinduism is more compact but regional variations exist and they are very natural. One should not attach too much significance to the rituals as are not religion. What is important is a dignified way of marrying one's daughter, what difference does it make whether it is done according to Hindu, Muslim or Christian rites?

There are people who eat beef, others pork and yet others who are pure vegetarians, but all of them are living perfectly well. This is not to advocate that people should not follow their religious rituals, but to claim that they are right and others wrong is absurd.

Fundamentalism is a wave which has set in recently. Fundamentalism implies going back to the original teachings of the texts and prophets. But, one does not know how to go back? Indeed, there are some genuine problems. If God is one, how is it that He revealed himself differently to different prophets? None of the prophets had any idea of the modern physical or social sciences, technology and organisations. How can one apply their teachings to the modern conditions? The drive and motivation behind all prophets and gurus are well known. Buddha was perturbed by futile religious practices of his times, he genuinely wanted to find a way out; both Christ and Mohammed lived in times of utter confusion and social disorder. Guru Nanak was alarmed by the degeneration of society and he wanted to give a new light. Their teachings are not very different from their experience; Buddha talks of reason, Christ of love, Mohammed of one God instead of idols and Nanak of the supreme spirit. Also, their imagery is very local eg Mohammed, again and again in the Koran, promises a city of gardens with perennial rivers flowing underneath, which may appeal to people in Arabia but cannot be appreciated in an oriental setting of excessive rains. This is not to say that prophets and texts are irrelevant. Religions have significance in our life as before but fundamentalism amounts to putting the clock backwards.

The religions have tried to interpret man and universe based on insufficient data and knowledge at that point of time. Religious explanations on genesis, evolution of life, cosmogony, cosmography etc. are thoroughly out dated. Some of the explanations are naive for eg, a church father explained that melons have stripes because God had designed it as a family meal! Without offence to any religion, the facts are that knowledge is increasing and everything can no longer be attributed to God.

What then is a religion and wherein lies its significance? To sociologist McIver, religion is a supra-social relationship. Religions are certainly not out of place as Radhakrishnan rightly remarks that if God is not present on our earth, He cannot exist anywhere else. When religions teach love of God, worship, faith, fellow-feeling etc they are valid. Our knowledge of man particularly where it concerns mind-stuff is inadequate. The social sciences are full of limitations and we live in a world of half-truths. There are far too many blanks and the religions may be right—who knows? Life is something more than mechanism and materialism. Sciences deal with generalisation

and not individual problems. Sciences do not dispute religions for the simple reason that all matters pertaining to God and soul are beyond empirical observations and scientific methodology. Indeed the religions have a meaning and fulfil a very important necessity in our life. However, they must strip themselves from excretions to acquire a purer form.

Bertrand Russell felt that philosophy one day, will substitute religion. His arguments are sound but do not appear to be practicable, atleast in our time. Philosophy is too abstract for ordinary minds. The main problem with humanism is that it does not satisfy the urge for supra social relationship. A religion based humanism appears to be more workable.

It would be pertinent here to compare the role of religions in the old and modern societies. In the old days, the entire life of man and his thinking was religion-governed. The influence of religions as we see in undeveloped countries had also existed in the West. Gradually with the acquisition of knowledge and confidence, mankind has been able to distinguish between things that belong to God and things that are secular. And, this is precisely the difference between developed and developing societies. In the developing societies, too much emphasis is placed on religions whereas in the developed countries politics, economics, social organisation etc. are secular, stripped of religious influences.

We have dwelt so much on religion only to show that communalism is a sign of backward societies. Communalism is based on rituals. Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, Christians etc. in the normal course live together and lead a harmonious life, but then sudden eruptions take place because a place of worship has been defiled, religious practices of one community obstructed or some such reason. When communal violence takes place, the state has to butt in. Maintenance of law and order, in practical terms, implies force ie suppress violence by greater violence. People resent the actions of the police and paramilitary forces, but what else can be done ?

Communalism has yet another derogatory aspect. It is understandable that people of one community compare themselves with others, but surely backward practices of other communities must not be followed. If a community is opposed to birth control, it would be absurd for others to multiply. Similarly, a progressive community must not seek backward practices of personal laws. We know what the good is and we must have confidence that in due course all religions will free themselves from the shackles of rituals.

Our hope against communalism are the sane policies embodied in our constitution which is incumbent upon all governments to follow. Indian secularism implies that all religions are free to profess and

propagate their faith. Incidentally, this is also the case in America and other developed countries, but in their case no communal disturbance takes place; why in our case? This shows that we are not as yet mentally developed. Our secularism is based on the realities of the situation. Ours is a multi-religious country where people of various religions are thoroughly mixed up. Under the circumstances, no other policy can succeed. Gandhi ji was right—religions are personal matters and should never get involved in politics. Those who advocate religion based parties must bear in mind who will govern them once they come in power. Surely, we cannot permit priests to decide social, economic and political affairs of the state. Interestingly, we disregard some very important teachings of the text. According to the Koran, the Imam should be a man of science. One wonders how many Imams are qualified.

### ECONOMIC THREATS

Like social problems, we face many economic problems but as far as threats are concerned, we can identify two, ie poverty and can the country stand on its own feet? India is a poor country and by the standards of the developed world, its poverty is appalling. About 48% of its people live below the poverty line and the per capita income is ridiculously low. The disparity is equally glaring and here we must heed to the warning of sociologists that more than anything else, it is disparity which causes upheaval in any society. What are the magnitude and implications of these threats?

Poverty is not new to our country. We know that in Buddha's time, the plight of the common man was miserable and Paniker remarked that Buddha born today will recognise this country as his own. A film like 'Gandhi' portrays the abject poverty of the people. What is not commonly understood is that throughout the medieval period, in every country both in the East and West, the people had lived the life of utmost poverty except for kings, knights, nobles and high priests. Socialism, welfare state, right to work, unemployment benefits etc are very recent concepts which differentiate developed and the developing countries.

In India, no longer that kind of poverty and starvation exists as they did prior to Independence. Indeed we have a long way but have yet to cover many miles. It is a case of comparison; we are certainly better than before but are very much behind other countries.

In the Indian setting, it must be understood that poverty is not a sin, something which is abhorred by the society. In India, the poor are not wretched nor the rich respected as happens in the class societies of the West. Simplicity and self-abnegation have had a long history continuity in our culture. We have the example of innumerable Rishis,

Buddha who left his kingdom and went round with a begging bowl and various saints from the fifteenth to the eighteenth century all over India—the typical of whom was Nanak who did not mind the rich but preferred to live with the poor. In our culture, poverty has been looked upon as a virtue and riches despised. One would come across many couplets in all regional languages where vices are the accompaniment of wealth. This is not a country where Karl Marx can sell his ideas.

Coupled with poverty is unemployment. The figures are rising year after year and we have both educated and uneducated unemployment in the urban and rural sectors. But here again, Indian unemployment must not be compared with the West, where every grown up boy or girl has to fend for himself or herself. In our country the unemployed are looked after by their kith and kin. It may well be that unemployment figures are exaggerated; in any case the experts know that it is very difficult to determine what constitutes unemployment.

With regard to poverty and unemployment, one has to answer a few searching questions. If the poverty and unemployment situation is grave, how is it that one cannot get cheap labour even for unskilled and menial work? How is it that we have had no violence and agitation on account of poverty and unemployment? And lastly, how is it that frustration has not set in amongst the youth? But such indicators are by no means a sign of a happy situation. On the whole, poverty remains the foremost problem and a potential threat. If it has not caused explosive situations so far it is because of our socio-philosophy, but it will change.

The second threat that we face is our ability to stand on our own feet. This question has assumed added importance due to economic policies being followed by the US and some of its allies. Now that the markets are being tightened and soft loans curbed, can India sustain herself? Here we are lucky; our poor country generates 90% of her developmental fund and the capital is by no means small, the next plan envisages an outlay of Rs. 96,000 crores. In this respect our is a poor country but with a strong economy, we don't have debt liabilities like Latin American and many other countries who had launched ambitious plans for development by large scale borrowing and are now in despair. The foreign exchange reserve is showing signs of improvement and what more, we have surrendered 1.1 billion to IMF.

The Indian policy of economic development and experience is unique, very different from most of the developing countries. Basically our policy has been that of self-reliance and doing it ourselves. Accordingly, we had gone in for basic and heavy industries. Following the



policy of self-reliance and all round development, we had invested huge amounts in colleges, universities, laboratories and research institutions. Today, we are in every field of development space, nuclear energy, engineering, electronics, bio-technology, aviation, oceanography, medicine, agriculture and whatever one can think of. We have been very conservative in borrowing and have kept our internal market intact, free from foreign invasion. It is now that we are in a position to reap the fruits of our investments. Incidentally, the confidence that we show has come about only in the last few years. There should be no doubt that India is on a strong footing and can sustain herself economically.

Our economic policies, answer many a question. It is often alleged that India has neglected its people. After all, the late starters like Egypt, Malaysia, Indonesia, Thailand, Taiwan, South Korea etc have done much better and greater good to their people than we have. The lot of the common man in these countries is much better than ours. But, what obviously we have in greater proportion is the degree of self-reliance and ability to stand on our own feet. To be sure, the Indian poverty will resolve itself one day.

It is also alleged that Indian economic progress has been slow. It is inherent in our policy that we want to do everything ourselves. To those who desire rapid changes, one would say that development has to be earned. Unearned wealth can do more harm than good. First of all, the society itself must be prepared to accept changes. Development is not merely a question of GNP or per capita income, it involves attitudes of the people and that takes time. If money is the only criteria, then oil rich countries are the most developed.

And finally, there is the question of generation of capital. Indian savings amount to approximately 26% which is about the highest in the world. The stingy, saving conscious Indian has done a great good to the country. Now, this capital which supports our development plans comes from a very small section of the society. This has to be tapped and invested for the benefit of a large number of people who do not contribute anything to the exchequer. Partly this explains the disparity which appears to be unavoidable because government undertakings and the public sector have not done a good job.

Removal of poverty is a catchy slogan that appeals to sentiments, but one that cannot be achieved in a short time. However, we are on the right path and our economic policies are sane. It is not possible for an average man to read Government of India publications on Five Year Plans, but people should know that we have a standing body of experts who debate and resolve the commonly talked about problems of poverty, social injustice, removal of regional imbalance, development of rural areas and so on. Equally, the people should also

know the phenomenon of dilation of time. What took thousands of years has been achieved in the last one century and what appears to be far off will be achieved in the next fifteen to twenty years.

### POLITICAL THREATS

By one stroke of opting for democracy, we have resolved most of our could-be political problems, but then other problems have crept up, and they must—after all we do not live a dream world. India is not new to democratic concepts but she is new to democratic procedures and practices and this has created problems. It would not be correct to say that the country is unfit for democracy. However, the fact that procedures and practices take time to establish must not be overlooked. It takes time to shed the charismatic influence of leaders like Gandhi and Nehru and the residual effect of a long struggle for independence. After 36 years, we will do well to remember that politics is simply a competition for people's votes to gain power.

The political problems in our country are many. Some of the problems are inherent in democracies, such as intellectuals staying away from politics, cult of incompetence, exorbitant cost to keep the system going, corruption, unhealthy competition etc; the other problems are due to immaturity such as floor-crossing, formation, dissolution and splintering of political parties which are the symptoms of an evolving democracy, not yet established. The major problem in our country is that we do not have a two party system. If only we had a two party system, some of the problems which have assumed the magnitude of threats such as regionalism, linguism, religion based parties, extremism, centre-state relations etc would not have arisen. Politics is a game of power, and that too a very competitive one. Party policies and programmes, according to a scholar A. Brown, are made to win elections by exciting the sentiments of the people; and here any sentiments are good enough, even those such as linguism, regionalism, religions, caste etc. The emphasis is on vote-getting.

Now, in a predominant one party system hypothetically speaking, the ruling party is prone to complacency and corruption. When people are unhappy, they go in for alternatives and here we must remember that in practice democracy does not grant freedom to form a government but a choice amongst alternatives. This may explain why the regional, religion and language based parties come to power and later loose due to inherent weaknesses.

### LINGUISM

Languages are vehicles of expression and means of social intercourse. We cannot reach people unless regional languages are developed. It is heartening to see the progress made by regional papers. The number of books, magazines, publications, films in various

languages have multiplied many a time since Independence. Now all this is good, but we must understand the role of language in proper perspective.

Languages being the link and bond exercise, tremendous emotional appeal on the people. But, languages are not cultures; on the other hand it is culture which accepts, promotes or rejects and substitutes the language. Language decay is not something new, in our own country we have lost Sanskrit, Pali and Prakrit. The language decay has assumed added significance, in our times, due to shrinkage of the world and internationalism. Whether we like it or not, the fact remains that all our regional languages, dear as they are to us, have no meaning in the international situation. Looked from this point of view, Hindi alone out of all Indian languages has some standing in the international situation. However, people are welcome to reject Hindi but they cannot reject English, and to be sure, English is becoming more and more popular day by day. These are the realities which cannot be set aside.

It is highly erroneous to say that cultures cannot prosper in an alien language or language is essential for national or regional identity. Science and Technology are better understood in the English language. Even emotions are perfectly well understood and enjoyed in English poems, plays and novels and not only of English authors but in translations of writers in other languages. Why, even Indian philosophy in our universities is taught in English language? The author is not particularly fond of the English language, but the realities must be understood and wrong notions about the role of language must be expelled. Strictly speaking, all languages are inexact, not fit for science and technology. On applications, one finds amusing endorsements such as recommended, strongly recommended, very strongly recommended and very very strongly recommended. Now, what do they mean?

Preservation and promotion of language is a social problem. Why has politics intervened? There is a general feeling, not very wrong, that anything which is dirty and intriguing is politics. Politicization of language has no basis. Afterall, languages cannot solve social, economic and political problems. Can they?

#### REGIONALISM

Conceptually, regionalism is not a bad proposition. It implies that the states should be economically viable, have a balance of agriculture, industries, natural resources and should be conducive for easy administration. As a concept, regionalism would imply that the country should be divided into zones doing away with linguistic provinces. However, in India regionalism has taken a different connotation. It is based on language and religion. Its slogan is more powers for the states and decentralisation.

Regionalism again, has a wider meaning. It also implies that sovereign countries in a region should group together for economic development and security. The examples of such regionalism are EEC and ASEAN. One world government is a good concept but it can be achieved only through stages; nationalism must be replaced by regionalism, regionalism by continentalism and continentalism by one world. Right now, regionalism in this wider sense is important, being the next step. South Asia as a region is not a very distant target.

Let us revert to regionalism, as it exists in our country. We have already noted that regionalism is based on language, religion and centre-state relations. Of these, we have already considered religion and languages, what we need to examine now is centre-state relations. More powers to the states and democratic decentralisation are indeed lofty ideals. Who would deny them? The question is how far are they practicable.

KM Panikar was the sole voice at the time of constitution framing, who felt that India should have a unitary government. His arguments were based on the fact that India after independence will be responsible for its defence. Now defence is not merely armed forces; it encompasses communications (P and T, shipping, airlines, railways road system), industries, science and technology, food, morale of the nation and so on. What Panikar was highlighting was inter-sectoral dependence. Now, more powers to the states is a very catching concept, but how are we going to resolve the problem of water-management, forestry, generation and distribution of power, imbalance in regional development etc? Let us take an example—Bargi dam in Madhya Pradesh would give another Punjab to our country, something which is a dire necessity but the project was delayed for several years because of inter-state dispute. Can progressive states like Maharashtra, Gujrat, Punjab and Haryana deny that there are backward states in our country who need more funds in the national interest? The simple facts are that when resources are limited, the answer is centralisation and hence controls. Unfortunately no one likes controls.

Notwithstanding the above, the case for decentralisation is unassailable. In a democracy, the government and administration must be as close to the people as possible. What right has a government to impose plans on the people? Surely, all development planning must start at the grass root level. One understands the argument that we are not as yet ready for further decentralisation and as the country develops, more and more decentralisation will take place. But decentralisation, if it has to have a meaning, must be linked with resources and self-sufficiency, for decentralised states heavily relaying on the centre is an absurdity. Those who cry for more

powers to the states must also consider economic viability of the states. This is possible only if we do away with linguistic states and the country is divided into balanced zones.

The Indian brand of regionalism lacks sustenance. It is based on the faulty premises of language, religion and increased power which is not feasible under the situation. Would we be wrong to say that regionalism is only a political slogan? How is it that such a call comes only from those parties who are opposed to the ruling party at the centre?

### INSURGENCY

We are not new to insurgency. We have faced this problem in several states and have successfully overcome them. What did concern us was insurgency in the NE states. Presently the insurgency in these states is on the lowest ebb, almost extinct. There is, therefore, no point in considering insurgency as a threat but insurgency in NE states brings out important point of identity which merits attention.

At the time of Independence, Assam itself was remote. The hill regions were in reality cut-off and inaccessible. Under such a situation, how far is the concept of Indian identity and nationalism valid?

Earlier we had noted that India is a multi-ethnic, multi-lingual and multi-cultural country. It would be absurd to seek original Indians; people have come to this land at varying points of time and have absorbed many shocks and invasions. Identity and nationalism is a matter of feeling, but certain facts cannot be ignored.

In our country, there are no parts which are reserved for exploitation by other parts or the rest of the country. On the other hand, the country spends huge amount for the development of the backward regions. The inner line is significant in this respect and must remain valid till such time that all parts of the country are equally developed. Counter-insurgency implies winning the hearts of the people. Slowly, as these states are getting developed and the people are being absorbed into the main stream, the suspicion is getting obliterated. The Indian identity and nationalism, thus is a function of development. There is also one more aspect in modern days i.e small countries have no standing. Even a big country like ours is finding difficulty in digging ground in the international situation; one wonders what standing will small states have, should they secede.

But the problem of identity persists in several states and it will disappear only when the minds are enlightened. Now, there are sub systems which exist within a larger system and they need not conflict.

As the time passes and the world gets closer, we have to learn to live in yet larger systems than we are used to. Regional cultures are good but there is a larger system of national and international culture : vernacular languages are good but there exists a more effective means of social intercourse ie national and international language; religions are good but there is a common religion of humanity which transcends all other religions. It is time that we get out of narrow grooves. These are the compulsions of time and not very difficult to achieve. Take the average educated Indian, he speaks in his dialect but knows a bit of Hindi and certainly speaks English well; he follows his religion but is completely at home with people of other religions; he follows his regional culture but is certainly not at a loss when faced other cultures. We have already reached a stage when Indian identity and nationalism has become a reality. Rather, it is time that educated Indians think in terms of South Asian regionalism. It is in this context that linguism, communalism, religion based parties and regionalism are out of tune with time.

#### EXTREMISM

Extremism can never be acceptable to any society. Life cannot be lived without order and whenever there is disorder, the state and the inbuilt social mechanism rise to restore order. But seeds of extremism in any society exist as surely as gangsters, dacoits and maniacs exist. As it is, life has been fouled by a few hijackers, bank robbers and criminals. The amount of inconvenience caused to the public, security restrictions imposed and the quantum of money spent just for sake of a few criminals is regrettable. But what happens when extremists are encouraged by organised sections of the society or political parties ?

Morality and social order have simple explanations. It pays few thieves to steal because most of the people are honest, but what would happen if everyone starts stealing ? In that case thefts would no longer be profitable. Extremism encouraged by a section of the society may temporarily seem to pay because of intimidation but what would happen if other sections of the society retaliate ? Violence and killings cannot resolve problems. Besides, there is a danger that attitudes may harden and people may get used to a certain style of life.

The action of extremists must not be confused with bravery. They are not like guerillas who have a cause, a spirit of sacrifice and hence courage to fight government troops. Killing of innocent people, bank robberies etc are acts of cowardice and mental derangement.

No maniac, no dacoit or murderer can ever rise to the stature of saints, nor can any religion or saint preach such practices. However, extremism by isolate individuals cannot be ruled out; it has

always been there as a sad part of social existence, but political or religious support to extremists is a grave folly. Extremists take advantage of a certain environment and it is our duty to ensure that opportunities are not given to the extremists.

Extremism in our country is alien to indigenous culture which is highly affiliative and tolerant. Its chances of success are remote. Extremism can boomerang and Assam was a bitter lesson. When religions or regional sentiments are exploited, the people keep quite but surely no one likes disruption of ordinary life, cessation of economic activity and development programmes coming to a stand still. In the long run those who encourage extremism are the losers.

#### DESTABILISATION

The security needs of superpowers are endless. They need satellites on this earth, in the space and navies on the seas. Coups, political murders, changing heads of governments, inciting a section of the people, election funds, interventions, arranging local wars etc are some of the games played during cold war to maintain a favourable situation. It is not only the superpowers, but other countries also, which play this game to a varying degree. One feels sorry for the small countries who can be rocked easily.

Luckily India is well placed in this respect for many reasons. First of all, India is a big country. In democracies, destabilisation is not easy; there is little point in eliminating heads of government unless public opinion is changed. The heads of government in any case are meant to be changed. We are adequately self-sufficient and hence not susceptible to threats by any power. Our neutral stance is acceptable to both the superpowers, and stable India is in global interest. Nonetheless, we should beware of external forces attempting destabilisation. External pulls and pressures are working all the time in our country. We cannot stop them, but we can be careful.

Communalism, linguism, regionalism, extremism, etc are political creations for grabbing power. They lack substance. Appeal to baser emotions is the lack of maturity on the part of political parties.

It is reiterated that our political problems are due to non-establishment of democratic practices. There is a democratic convention that a party in power must be accepted for the stipulated term. Unfortunately this convention has not been followed. In our country, we have plenty of opposition but no national opposition party. The opposition party need not have radical or diametrically opposite policies. After all, the country is the same and so are its problems. After 36 years, public opinion has crystallized on major issues pertaining to foreign and domestic policies. The debate is no longer on the desirability of capitalistic, socialistic or religion based parties. What

the country needs is an alternative to the ruling party rather than policies. Here, we need to follow the system prevalent in the US and UK. The two party system would resolve most of our political problems. Admittedly, we do not have the historical experience of a two party system and the problems are there in the formation of a national opposition. However, it is upto the political leaders to resolve this problem. Meanwhile, the public opinion is getting enlightened. It is doubtful if regional parties will have any lasting value.

### PROSPECTS

Our school boys and girls sing—"Ham Honge Kamyab". The wordings are good and music beautiful. Children don't understand the implications but they have enthusiasm and hope. How much substance is there in their hope that we will succeed?

For those who are disposed towards pessimism, and the prophets of gloom, we can add many more weaknesses to the list. We suffer from malnutrition, the standard of hygiene and sanitation is poor, the lack of public ethic is pronounced, the literacy percentage is far from satisfactory and we are producing children regardless. On a day when our pockets are picked, trains delayed, traffic jammed, the taxi driver fleeces us, the police is overbearing etc India appears to be a rotten country.

But, when we think objectively, the country has made tremendous progress. We have gained self-sufficiency in food and clothing. Our achievements in sciences and technology are promising. The economic prospects are bright and they will remain so till the end of this century. We are not going to be affected by recession or any such world-wide phenomenon. The scope for further development, market and funds are within the country.

A country is what its people are. Indians as a whole have worked hard. Our scientists and technicians have done well but so have our farmers, workers in the factories, business community and others. Indians are very hard working, both abroad and at home. The lazy Indians are found only in the government, its departments, undertakings and the public sector.

When we say that economic prospects are good, it does not mean that we are going to reach the standards of developed countries very soon or compete with them. All it means is that we have competence and can manage our own affairs. Our biggest problem is a growing population which neutralizes all our achievements. The resources of the country are being strained to the limit. Further development is linked with population control.

Economic prospects are not an end in themselves. It will be observed that as economic prospects are becoming brighter, social and political tensions are creeping in. Thinkers, saints and philosophers have made certain prognostications long before. Human problems are not merely those of hunger, clothing and shelter. These are the problems of sciences and technology which are already well advanced. Life will become more and more comfortable with all



the machines and gadgets that we can think of. The human problem is—can we live together? Here sciences and technology are helpless. Herein lies the importance of philosophy, religion and culture. Can our people, who have a rich heritage, resolve socio-political differences and stop disruptive forces?

Development is not a smooth affair of climbing a ladder step by step. Social problems are complex and need a concerted effort by all sections of society. We go back to the chorus and enthusiasm of our young children. Yes, we will be successful provided we don't let folly in and wisdom out.

# ALL ARMS CONCEPT

BRIGADIER S K BAHRI

## INTRODUCTION

**T**HE Indian Army is on the threshold of modernising itself to meet its adversary in a battlefield environment which will be obtainable in the next 10 to 15 years. While we are striving to introduce the best equipment available to us from various sources, within our financial constraints, we seem to be still thinking of the Army as separate compartments which need to be refurbished one by one as the resources permit. We have yet to start thinking of the Army as one cohesive organisation whose total efficiency is equivalent to the weakest component. If all the components are strong or well matched like those of a hand crafted gear box of a Rolls Royce car, the total organisation will function with the requisite efficiency. We have still to adopt a systems approach to gear up our army to meet an adversary in a future war. There are proponents of an armour oriented army, while there are some who proclaim that infantry deserves its rightful place in the scheme of things. There is then the third category who feel that without mechanised infantry the army is ineffective.

The Indian Army is not the only one which has its components competing for supremacy. Take for instance the Canadian Armed Forces, which were the first to attempt a unified concept between the army, navy and the air force; with common uniforms, ranks and command structure. But just south of the border General Donn Starry of the US Army bemoans the state in that Army in the Sep-Oct. 78 issue of the magazine 'Armour'—

"Instead of listening intelligently to one another, we are divided into two or three strident camps. Every one of us who has successfully commanded a unit of tanks, mechanised infantry, cavalry, or attack helicopters is an expert at how those units should be organised, equipped and employed. Unable to put aside..... personal experience and embrace a broader Combined Arms Team perspective, we debate endlessly."

Are we facing similar problems in our country.

## FUTURE BATTLE FIELD ENVIRONMENT

A war in the next decade or so will be short, intense, involving considerable speed of manoeuvre and highly destructive if one is to take a lesson from the serious conflicts that have taken place in the

last 15 years or so. Gone are the days when new doctrines and weapon systems could be introduced and troops trained to employ them during the currency of the conflict. Time will be at a premium and the side which can mobilize its forces faster, efficiently and fight as a well oiled and integrated organisation will gain the initiative and carry the day. We do not have time to make composite formations by patching on the supporting arms and services and then expect them to fight as a cohesive force. Can we really expect an IAF attack helicopter unit which has functioned for a few days in a year with the army and can barely made out a tank from an infantry combat vehicle, to deliver the goods. Similarly, it would be futile to expect an independent armoured brigade to marry up with an infantry division and be expected to perform as well as a fully integrated team.

In our s b continent there is also the possibility of Pakistan exercising the unclear option. If that happens it is obvious that monolithic formations like our armoured and infantry divisions with centralised supporting arms and services will face difficulties. The anxiety to avoid presenting a large and lucrative target for a nuclear strike will require that the formations be dispersed, self sufficient to fight as independent entities.

The above requirement is reinforced by the fact that the introduction of night vision devices and enhanced electronic surveillance capabilities permit the adversary to anticipate the intention and plans by the movement of a large formation like a division, which is located in a number of military stations in close proximity due to administrative and training needs, in a particular direction. There is therefore a necessity to break the large sized formations into smaller self sufficient components which can be concentrated under a formation headquarters from different directions at the last minute. Similarly, they should be capable of being detached with equal ease to achieve necessary surprise.

While talking about advanced technology it must be remembered that it will not be possible to farm out detachments of all types of weapon or surveillance systems to the lowest units or formation due to reasons of economy and optimum utility. This will be more so in our context. For example, western armies have anti tank guided missiles and battlefield surveillance equipment in each infantry battalion. For better coordination and effectiveness obviously, our aim also will be try and integrate all essential systems in the user units. But it is obvious that though it is desirable, it may not be possible to do so in our country, till either the resources improve or we can produce the equipment cheaply and in plenty.

Another aspect that needs to be considered is the feverish mechanisation of the armed forces by our adversaries. Firstly, most of the front line vehicles will have the speed and armour protection to

exploit their mobility to the maximum extent. Secondly, the enemy will try to neutralise both. For this he will have to be provided the necessary engineer component which can breach or bridge obstacles so that the manoeuvre force is not delayed. Moreover to defeat the armour protection, specially of tanks, a larger calibre gun (more than 105 mm) will have to be provided. This gun must, of course, have matching mobility as the ICVs and tanks.

As mentioned above, mechanised warfare is going to be more prevalent in future conflicts. Therefore greater cooperation and integration is needed between armour which will capture objectives and the infantry which will hold them. This of course is the classic concept. But in a future war this may have to be suitably modified because the securing and holding components may have to be amalgamated so that one organisation handles both the tasks. This is a lesson learnt from the Yom Kippur War when the Israelis nearly came to grief when they thought that armour was to carry out all the tasks itself—little realising that against a matching rival such an unbalanced force has little chance of success. They also seem to have taken the lesson well because they were the first to come out with a tank like Merkava, which has a normal tank gun and space for an infantry section. This ensures that both the armour and infantry are available at hand at all times and there will be no requirement of mixing sub-units of two different units for a task. Such a unit will be in a position to provide its own pivots or carry out mopping up of dug down infantry after the tanks have carried out the assault.

Command and control is another area which need to be studied. Responsiveness of the component armed services will have to be hair trigger sensitive. Arms and service units requesting their superior headquarter for clearance of instructions given by a formation commander will not be possible. All such units must be under the direct command of the concerned commander as the anticipated speed and intensity of warfare precludes the acceptance of tradiness on any constituent's part. A reappraisal of our affiliation system of arms and services is therefore required. Be it armour with infantry and vice versa on one hand, and artillery, engineers and support services on the other. A qualitative improvement in our commanders is also necessary as they must learn the organisation and employment of the other arms. Right now the dependence to a very large extent, is on the advisers and the arm or service heads at the division headquarters.

#### WHAT THE OTHER ARMIES ARE DOING

The Indian Army normally acquires equipment 8 to 10 years after it has been adopted by western countries. The reasons are paucity of financial resources, unwillingness of these countries to part with the latest technology, our inability to absorb this technology due

to the quantum jump from the one in use and lastly due to appreciation on our part about the equipment being acquired by our possible adversaries.

In Europe the armies are facing the picture painted of a future war scenario in the earlier part of this article, at the present moment. Most of the forward thinking countries who have the economic resources have tried to tailor their combat units to meet the demands of a future war. Amongst the NATO countries the Federal Republic of Germany and France have adopted the combined arms team concept at the brigade group level. Though not a member of the NATO, Sweden too has gone in for a similar organisation. Outline organisations of the brigade groups in these countries are at Appendices A, B and C respectively. It is clarified that though the French and Swedes call their brigade groups, divisions and regiments respectively they really are quite similar in their tank, infantry and artillery strengths

Each of these brigade group sized units has three to four armour and or infantry units with integral artillery, engineer, signal and service units. Thus the formation is self sufficient for its basic needs. It is also quite capable of functioning independently in both the offensive and defensive operations of war, as it has the necessary manoeuvre units, holding units and fire power. There is hardly any need for additional troops for various operations except artillery which will be needed during a deliberate attack. This can easily be slapped on from the resources available with the superior formation. In the German and Swedish armies it is the division and in the French Army it is the corps headquarters.

These headquarters are capable of handling three to five brigades/divisions (French) each. They have the additional requirements of reconnaissance and surveillance units, heavy artillery in the form of surface to surface missiles, large calibre guns, multi-barrel rocket launchers and air defence support which can be allotted to the brigade sized force needing it. Additional support in the form of attack helicopter and transport helicopter are also available for employment where necessary. The engineer and service elements are also provided to undertake tasks which are beyond the capability of the brigades be it in the form of additional bridging equipment to permit the crossing of follow up forces or logistic support to cater for rear echelon repairs to equipment or providing a higher level of treatment to the personnel casualties. Thus the controlling formation headquarters has additional resources which are either scarce and so have to be centralised or those which the brigade groups do not need immediately and would normally prove a drag when not required.

You may also notice that there are three levels of integration

between the armour and infantry in the three countries whose organisations have been appended. The German army has kept the armour and mechanised infantry units as separate entities to be grouped in the proportions required. The French army has gone one step further and integrated the armour and infantry in the battalions also. They have given one mechanised company and four tank companies in the tank battalions while they have two companies of each in the mechanised battalions. This is another way of ensuring that these two component arms are so well trained and grouped that there is no requirement of making attachments and detachments between them during battle. Such mixtures of the two arms is reminiscent of the rifle troop in the light armoured regiment of our own army a couple of decades ago.

Compared to France and Germany the Swedes have gone a step further. They have integrated a company of artillery ( $4 \times 105$  mm) and an engineer platoon (including bridging equipment) with a tank battalion, even though there is an engineer battalion authorised in the armoured regiment. The Swedish army has therefore, tried to achieve the ultimate in the all arms concept. In their case the tank battalion commander does not have to look over his shoulder for help for any task which is within his capability. He is therefore better able to take advantage of fleeting opportunities as he has all the requisite elements under command. Moreover, he will be sure of the performance and response of each component as he would have trained them himself.

The most important army in the West is the US army which while recognising the requirement of imbibing the combined or all arms concept has been unable to break away from the well-trodden path due to the lobbies at work. General Starry's quotation given earlier on, clearly states that. An American infantry officer expresses the same view in Jan-Feb 83 issue of the magazine *Armour*.

"Commanders and leaders at all levels in the Infantry, Armour, Field Artillery and Engineer branches are told, taught and exhorted to think and train using the combined arms concept .....The tank/infantry team exists 90 percent of the time on paper.....but only 10 percent in reality during training".

The British on the other hand did organise some battle groups on this concept but have not so far adopted them. While we are talking of the all arms concept concerning the arms and services of the army only the USSR has adopted this concept between their army and air force. Unlike our country, the tactical air force in Russia which has responsibility upto areas 400 km deep in enemy territory, is placed directly under the ground forces commander of the theatre. No comments are made on our fixed wing air force in this context, but surely the integration of the rotary wing component with the army to

obtain the maximum advantage by other countries should be taken note of.

There are a number of countries which are as tradition bound as us eg the UK and Pakistan. But, they too have at last accepted that there is a very strong requirement of an army aviation corps. From the reports sent by our students who have recently attended courses in the UK it is evident that the integration of the helicopters into the functioning of the ground forces is total. This would be impossible to achieve if the helicopters were still part of the air force. The French and the Americans have of course created the army aviation wings much earlier, having realised the importance of a combined arms concept.

Though training will be carried out by the brigade commanders of all the arms and service units under command, but it would be necessary for the arm and service heads in the division headquarters to which the formations are affiliated during peace time to ensure that the technical training of these units and sub-units is carried out as per the current instructions. This is essential to ensure that the technical training of these units and sub-units is carried out as per the current instructions. This is essential to ensure uniformity of technical training all over the army otherwise it is possible that each brigade may evolve its own training methods and drills.

#### A SOLUTION FOR INDIA

Due to the threats to national security India has to perforce maintain large sized forces to counter the belligerence of its potential adversaries. The present defence budget itself is a heavy burden on the exchequer as it has to compete with the needs of development in the country. We therefore, obviously cannot either acquire the sophisticated equipment or distribute it down to the same levels as other affluent countries. But it must be understood that one of the ways of getting the maximum mileage out of our resources is that we must not only increase our strategic but our tactical mobility also. This will ensure that hard hitting units and formations will have the ability of influencing the battlefield over larger frontages. They will be able to either concentrate for an offensive or a defensive battle with greater facility. Thus it is imperative that all infantry units must either be combat vehicle or mechanical transport borne so that they can keep up with the spearhead of the army ie, armour, and function in concert with it. The other arms and services should also have matching mobility to further the aim of a combat force.

Another point that needs to be resolved is, whether the present concept of all arms integration at division level is appropriate or should we also adopt the course followed by the three European countries mentioned earlier and adopt the brigade group concept. Taking

into consideration the future battlefield environment it is obvious that a brigade sized force is more likely to be used as a single entity rather than a division or a battalion. As these brigade groups or combat commands will be functioning further apart in a future war than at present, due to enhanced mobility, it is imperative that we make such forces self sufficient to the maximum possible extent. Of course due to our inability to field equipment at the scales possible in richer countries we will have to initially provide expensive equipment in specialist units which will have to be sub-allotted according to the needs of a formation. We also cannot at one go adopt the level of integration achieved by the Swedish army because it is not possible for us, with our lower levels of education, to induct high technology equipment in our units. The care, maintenance and handling of such equipment will therefore, perforce have to be done by specialists, till we can improve the scientific temper in the country.

The organisations which are considered suitable for India are attached as under :—

- |                            |               |
|----------------------------|---------------|
| (a) Armoured Brigade Group | — Appendix D. |
| (b) Infantry Brigade Group | — Appendix E. |
| (c) Mountain Brigade Group | — Appendix F. |
| (d) Plains Division        | — Appendix G. |
| (e) Mountain Division      | — Appendix H. |

What has been attempted in the suggested organisations is that there should be in future only three types of brigades and two types of divisions, instead of the present four of each. This will simplify organisations and ensure that an officer who has commanded an armoured or infantry brigade is well equipped to command a plains division, instead of being slotted in a particular type of formation as at present. This will also permit a larger choice for selecting commanders for higher formations.

The armoured and infantry brigade groups have been given units of all arms and services so that they are operationally self sufficient except for certain expensive weapon systems, which will be held at the division headquarters. The latter will have to continue with an inbuilt capability to control three to five brigade groups. During peace time the division headquarters would mainly be required to ensure that the training of the component arms and services is technically upto standard. Operation oriented training will of course be the prerogative of the brigade group commander. The division headquarters will also provide additional artillery, engineer, signals and logistic support units. Other components like anti tank resources, surveillance equipment may also be kept under the division headquarters due to their paucity. Of course once resources permit they may also be made an integral part of the brigade group or units as appropriate. A squadron of Air OP helicopters has been



provided in the division headquarters of both types. Only difference being that plains division will have three flights of four helicopters while the mountain division will have two flights. This is to ensure that in the plains the unit is able to carry out tasks like engagement of artillery targets, aero-scouting for attack helicopters and provision of aerial command posts for commanders. In the mountains the squadron has been provided only two flights as, though the aero-scout role would be redundant, the tasks of casualty evacuation and surveillance of the division sector will assume greater importance. The present allocation of a flight to a division is totally inadequate.

It is also important that once our brigade groups in the plains have got used to functioning in a mixture of armour and mechanised infantry we should aim at the integration of the two in the unit. That is introducing a mix on the lines adopted by the French in their units allotted to their armoured and infantry divisions. While retaining their identity as armour and infantry, the integration of tanks with mechanised infantry will provide dividends that will be justified by vastly improved performance of an integrated unit.

#### TRAINING

Presently, all training of armour, infantry, artillery and engineers is done separately and very little training is carried out with each other. On an analysis being carried out at the college of combat of students attending the Senior Command Course it was found that a majority of the students had not done any training with other arms during the last five years of their service. For example, a squadron commander had not trained with either an infantry company or a battalion, and vice versa. A number of infantry company commanders had very seldom worked with their artillery advisers in sub-unit or unit level exercises. In such an environment how can one expect the combined arms concept to thrive.

If the army is to fight a future war successfully it has to devote much more time and effort on combined arms or affiliation training. It must be remembered that any team be it in the sports arena or in the battlefield can only perform as well as it has trained together. No single arm or service can win a war alone be it a "combat arm" or a "combat support arm", as they are known in the US. Some of the suggestions on joint training are given below :—

More information needs to be disseminated to officers, JCOs and ORs on the capabilities and limitations of arms other than their own. Right now this information is limited mainly to officers.

Armour and infantry must get two weeks live training every year in the equipment the other handles. This will reinforce the information they have already gained. This will be specially necessary in case of mechanised infantry and armour to understand the problems faced by the other.

Artillery must be involved in as many unit level and above exercises as possible. It is even more important for battalion and regiment commanders of the infantry and armour respectively to understand thoroughly how the employment of fire power can help them achieve their aims.

Mechanised infantry platoons and armour troops must train as teams. If the understanding of each others tactics is understood at this level then tactics at sub-unit and unit level become much simpler to unravel. It is much more important that the men come to know each other. Once these bonds are established the officers who have greater liaison with each other, will be able to get much more out of their men during battle.

Till the army aviation corps is created air OP pilots must be employed for scouting duties ahead of armour columns. They can then not only act as the eyes and ears of the ground forces commander but can direct the attack helicopters of the IAF on to the targets. The air OP pilots can then coordinate the movement of the manoeuvre unit in the air with the one on the ground.

It goes without saying that combined arms training should not remain in the form of an obligatory para in the training directives and instructions year after year. They need to be put into practice immediately so that functioning as a team during war becomes instinctive and does not require the opening of pamphlets at the last minute to master the drills that have been laid down.

#### CONCLUSION

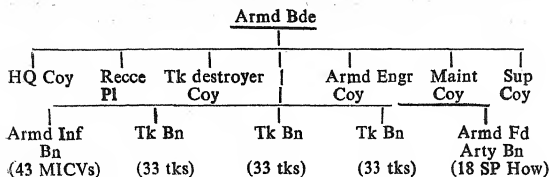
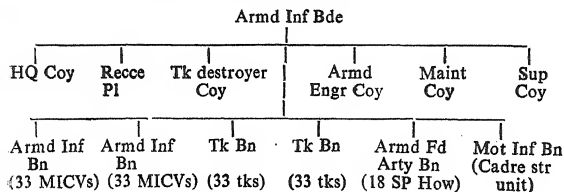
The all arms concept of functioning together is an imperative necessity and the earlier we adopt the better it would be in the interest of our country. Surely if we have come a step forward from the armoured brigade and lorried brigade days of the armoured division, we should now plan the next two steps forward so that our fighting formations are tailored for the tasks envisaged for them.

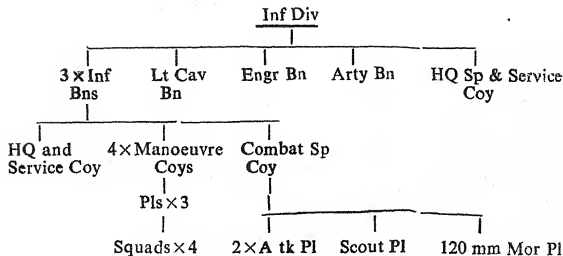
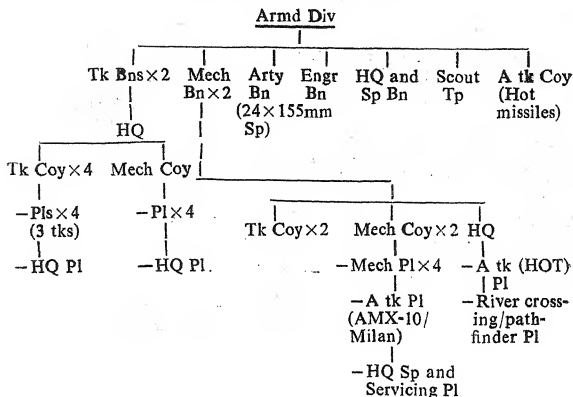
The conditions that will be obtaining in a future battlefield are such that speed of reaction will be extremely important. Unless the training of the arms and services is intimate and continuous the desired responses may not be forthcoming. Not only should armour and infantry be balanced in a combat command but other arms and services must be made integral to it so that the formation commander is able to handle and train his command into a cohesive organisation.

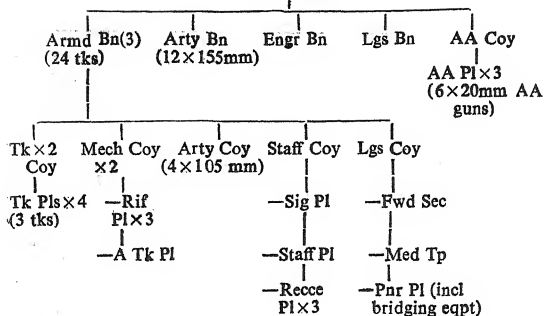
This integration is necessary in the army itself but also with other services like the air force. Close air support and transport support should be allotted to the ground forces for a specific theatre and anticipated operations at each level of command. The present practice of each service exercising rigid control over its assets is not productive. Given the resources for a specific operational plan, decentralisation of authority is a must with a necessary provision to centralise control when an over-riding requirement arises. The rotary wing aircraft have a special role in ground forces plans. Unless the pilots are brought up in the environment in which they have to operate the responses cannot be as good as when they have a feel of the swells and ebbs in a ground battle so that they can anticipate the demands that are likely to be made on them. If a

briefing is required to be done by a liaison officer at each stage obviously, the reaction will be that much slower.

What hampers the permeation of the all arms or combined arms concept into our very beings is the opposition to change and the desire to hold on to what people consider to be their domain. If we all could overcome these mental blocks and think only of the resultant good that will accrue from a change over to the all arms concept, we would be able to justify the expense that the country incurs on defence.

APPENDIX AFEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANYARMoured BRIGADE—80ARMoured INFANTRY BRIGADE

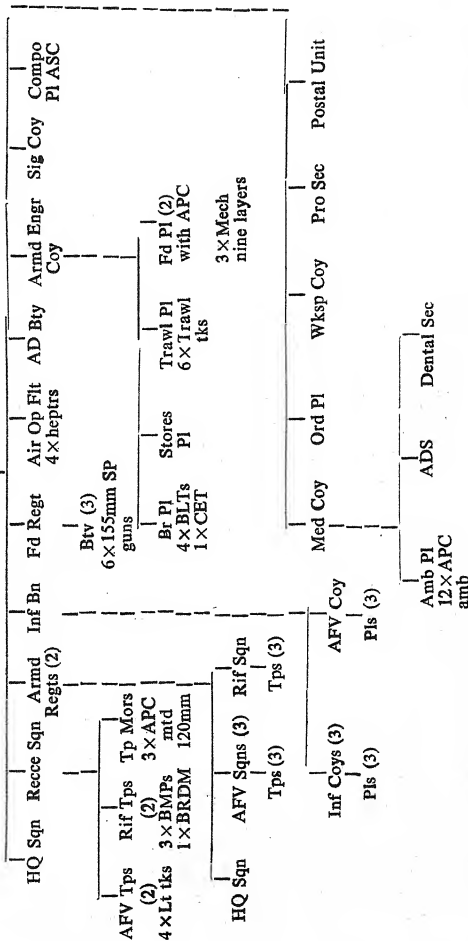
APPENDIX BFRANCEARMoured DIVISION

APPENDIX GSWEDENARMoured REGIMENTArmd Regt

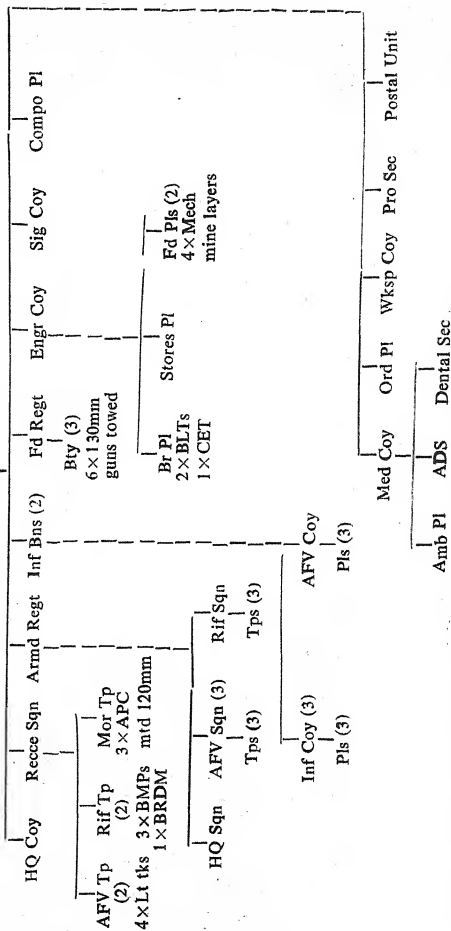
## SUGGESTED ORGANISATION FOR INDIA

## ARMoured BRIGADE

**Brigade HO**

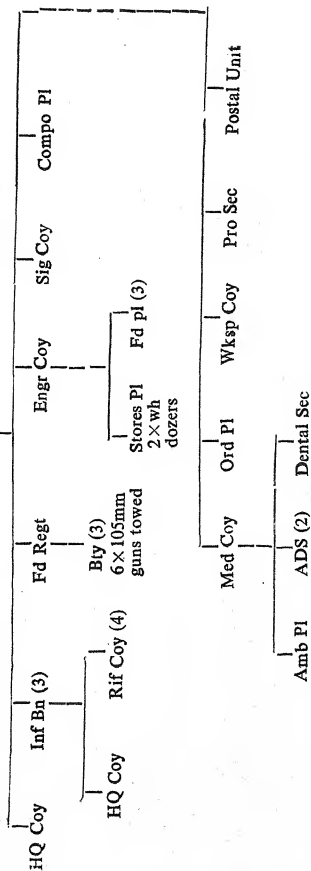


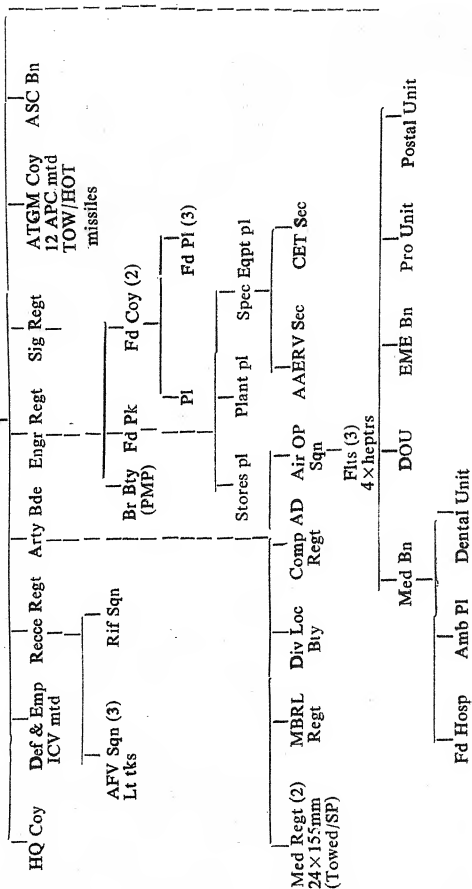
**Note :—Inf bns to be equipped with ICVs.**

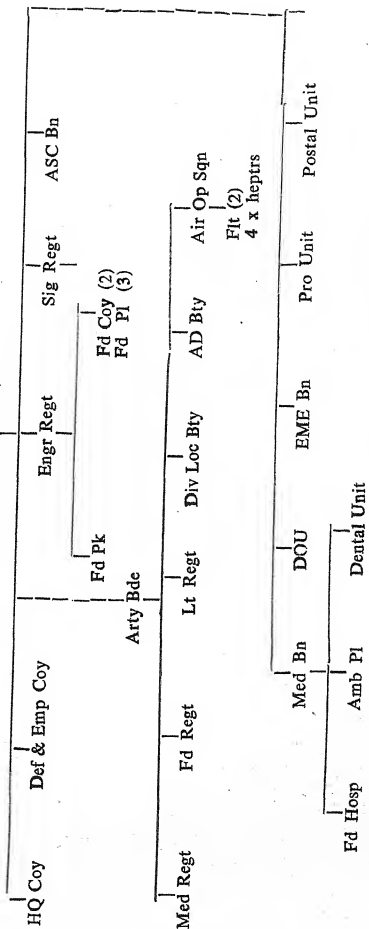
APPENDIX ESUGGESTED ORGANISATION FOR INDIAINFANTRY BRIGADEBRIGADE HQ

Note :—Inf Bns to be equipped with ICVs or 1 ton trucks according to requirement/availability.



APPENDIX FSUGGESTED ORGANISATION FOR INDIAMOUNTAIN BRIGADEBRIGADE HQ

SUGGESTED ORGANISATION FOR INDIAPLAINS DIVISIONDIVISION HQ

APPENDIX HSUGGESTED ORGANISATION FOR INDIAMOUNTAIN DIVISIONDIVISION HQ

# TANK UNDER FIRE

BRIGADIER VIRINDER UBEROY

## INTRODUCTION

ARMOUR has played a crucial role in war since its appearance on the battlefield. Its influence has been decisive at strategic as well as tactical levels. The concepts, doctrines and consequent employment of armour in war, therefore, has been one of the critical spheres of battlecraft. The existing doctrines for employment of armour have been based on the experience gained during the Second World War, specially towards its closing stage. These were logically derived from the characteristics of the tank as also the battlefield environments as those existed during that war. It is significant to note that although those battlefield environments and possibly some of the characteristics, have undergone substantial qualitative changes, the guiding principles for employment of armour have remained more or less unchanged. The main reason for this is the general tendency to accept the prevalent doctrines as basic rules. Such acceptance becomes almost sacrosanct in cases which have been tried and proved in war. Adhering rigidly to modes and methods belonging to a qualitatively different war can prove to be costly in a future conflict. Accordingly, there is a pressing need to review the existing concepts and tactical doctrines regarding employment of the tank in the light of changed battlefield environments.

## BACKGROUND

The tank appeared on the scene in 1917 during the Great war and broke the stalemate brought about by the static trench warfare. It restored mobility to the battlefield which had been lost ever since the last successful cavalry charge carried out towards the end of the Nineteenth Century. The machine gun, barbed wire and elaborate trench systems which had defied manoeuvres on both sides gave in to this weapon system. However, it was during the Second World War that the tank came into its best. The Blitzkreig operations by the Germans, skilful use of armour in the North African Campaign, employment of massive armoured formations by both sides in the Russian campaign and the Allied armoured onslaught against Germany after Normandy landings gave the tank the dominating position on the

battlefield. In the Post Second World War period, they were used again with decisive effect in the Arab-Israeli conflicts of 1956 and 1967. That was perhaps about the last time where armour was employed in the classic role of the Second World War pattern.

It was the Yom Kippur War, 1973 which drew attention to the changing position of the tank on the battlefield. During that conflict, the tank operated for the first time in a vastly changed battlefield environment characterised by intense anti tank weaponry. Heavy attrition caused to the Israeli armour highlighted the newly found vulnerability of the tank to the Egyptian anti tank weapons. The effectiveness of these weapons demonstrated during this conflict raised the question whether the tank had lost its place on the battlefield. This question remains un-answered although views have been expressed on the two extremes.

The technological advance made since the Yom Kippur War has further enhanced the effectiveness of the latest generation of anti tank weapons. While great strides have been made in increasing their 'kill' effectiveness, the tank has not made any corresponding developments to improve its counter anti tank capability, with the exception of the development of compound armour as a passive measure. In essence, the present environments existing over a tankable battlefield are anti-tank intensive, imposing considerable caution on the armour and restricting its sphere of action to a much reduced degree than the past. This is how we find the tank on the battlefield of today and to-morrow.

#### REVIEW TO TACTICAL CONCEPTS AND DOCTRINE

The tank, by virtue of its inherent characteristics of mobility, fire power and armoured protection is primarily meant to engage enemy in mobile battle, close within the range and destroy him by fire. The tactical doctrine governing operational employment of armour, more or less universally accepted, is based on utilisation of all these three characteristics in producing shock effect to get the best out of the tank as a weapon system. Accordingly, armour is considered to be employed at its optimum effectiveness when all these characteristics have been utilised. Conversely, a tank is considered to be under-utilised when any of these characteristics is not made use of or is utilised only marginally. There can be no two opinions to the validity of the principle of using a combination of all capabilities of a system for optimum effect. To that extent, the doctrine is on sound basis. However, the pitfall lies in evaluation of the characteristics and their relevance to the tactical battlefield.

The battlefield environments undergo substantial evolutionary changes with the passage of time. With every change, the effective-

ness of a weapon, which may be directly influenced by that change, would also vary. It is from this angle that there is a need to examine whether those basic characteristics with which the tank has dominated the battlefield for the past 60 years or so, are still relevant and to the same degree to modern warfare. In case there are some qualitative changes, a rethinking is obviously required on employment of armour in the future conflicts.

Such review should not be confined to our resources existing at the present point of time. It should consider total environments of a typical modern battlefield with a prospective view of foreseeable futuristic developments of tanks and anti tank weapons. Otherwise, it would result in a narrow analysis with consequent limited deductions having short term validity. At the same time, analysis should take realistic and practical approach while taking resources into consideration.

#### ANALYSIS OF THE CHARACTERISTICS

The three major characteristics viz mobility, armoured protection and fire power and the resultant shock effect need to be examined in greater details. It should be followed by analysis of the existing doctrines and recommended resultant changes, if any.

#### MOBILITY

To most of us, the very thought of questioning mobility of the tank appears ridiculous. A tank is obviously such a mobile vehicle and indeed a weapon system like no other land vehicle. Yet, this apparent quality needs a closer look. We tend to measure the degree of mobility of armour in its ability of self propulsion, cross country movement and speed. This approach, however, does not meet the requirement for evaluation of its tactical mobility. The mobility of tank should be considered in context of its ability of movement over various type of terrain under different battlefield conditions.

The tank needs a certain degree of hardness of soil or minimum essential firmness of ground for its movement. It also has difficulty in negotiating broken ground and dense vegetation. This has been the basic governing factor for employment of the tank. Apart from general ground condition, the terrain over which armour may have to operate has acquired different configuration than what existed in the past. Movement of armour would be adversely affected by vast networks of irrigation water channels, anti tank obstacles like extensive ditch, bund and area flooding. These impediments would necessitate specialised engineer effort before armour can move across. Every such obstacle would mean impediment of the armour. In areas where series of such obstacles are met, mobility of the armour is greatly

reduced. In fact, it is dependent upon engineer effort for its movement across these impediments.

Another aspect of mobility should be considered in terms of endurance to cover long distances. Armour has this unique capability. Over suitable terrain, it has enormous endurance and can cover vast distances at a high pace. Due to this capability, it is ideally suited for break-out and deep penetration phases of battle. Consequently, it lends itself ideally for strategic and tactical mobility. This aspect would have relevance only to those theatres or phases of operations where classic break-out involving armoured thrusts deep into the enemy territory are feasible and envisaged.

#### ARMoured PROTECTION

The characteristic of armoured protection implies provision of that degree of survivability of the tank and protection to its crew whereby the complete weapons system can continue to operate unaffected by hostile action. Earlier (before effective anti tank weapons appeared on the scene) there was hardly any weapon which could stop the rolling tank or cause casualties to its crew. That is why the earlier slow moving and lightly armoured tanks could overcome the opponent's resistance with comparative ease. In the Second World War, anti tank weapons, though developed by that time, were not really effective, except for the German 88 mm guns (basically designed for anti aircraft role). As a counter measure, the armoured thickness was increased due to which the tank retained the benefit of armoured protection. Except for a direct hit by a medium artillery gun or an anti tank round hitting some of its vital part at short range, the tank remained immune to the battlefield fire. Consequently, in a duel between the tank and the anti tank weapon, the outcome was heavily in favour of the former. That is why a tank has been considered to be the best anti tank weapon. The situation has changed considerably since then. The existing war-heads capable of penetrating any known or feasible thickness or armour with very high hit probability, have negated the armoured protection to a marked degree. The latest development of third generation anti tank laser based guided missiles having 'Fire & Forget' homing capability and option of various delivery systems have further increased the effectiveness of anti tank weaponry.

Another development that would have a substantial effect on the armoured protection is the recently developed artillery fired and precision guided munition against armour. With its capability to home on to multiple tank targets simultaneously, the anti tank weaponry would be augmented by a new concept and highly effective weapon system.

The minefields, specially those laid by artillery and helicopters in the path of moving armour and defying conventional clearance, is yet another developing sphere of anti tank munition. The armoured protection has no answer to this threat which affects safety of the crew as well as the tank's mobility.

The tank and its crew within are now exposed to highly effective anti tank fire. As against this, the survivability of the tank would surely improve with development of a better quality of plating like compound armour. However, it has its limitations. It is not feasible to give an all round 'wrap' to the tank with compound armour. The front and, possibly, some other small vital areas may only be provided with such covering. Its sides, rear and the top would, perforce, have to remain covered with normal steel and hence vulnerable to shaped charge. Development in the field of precision delivered kinetic energy ammunition would neutralise the compound armour to a great extent.

There can be no doubt that the rapid strides made in development of anti tank weapons pose a serious challenge to the tank on the battlefield. The tank, presenting a larger target than the anti tank weapon, specially when operated by one man lying in some fold in the ground and fired at double its gun range, is at a substantial disadvantage. Even when longer ranges are not available due to terrain configuration, the target acquisition by the anti-tank crew would be much quicker than the tank. Heliborne anti tank weapons pose a much more difficult problem to the tank. The elevated firing platform enables the weapon to exploit its superiority of range to a much greater degree than those based on vehicle and ground configuration. The tank has no retaliatory capability of its own against threat from the helicopter except for passive evasion. Heliborne weapons are particularly suitable to hit the top and sides of the soft spots which is of special advantage in the case of tanks clad in compound armour.

The net effect of the modern anti tank weaponry is that the characteristic of armoured protection has been much diluted. The tank no longer enjoys that degree of immunity against anti tank fire which it did in the past. This state could worsen further in the future.

Even though armour may be losing the 'edge' against anti tank weapons, it provides near immunity in the nuclear, biological and chemical warfare. Unless it is too close to the ground zero, the armoured plating would effectively protect its crew against fall-outs of a nuclear strike. Mechanised forces would be the decisive arm in those environments.



## FIRE POWER

A tank packs considerable fire power as integral part of its system. Its high muzzle velocity main gun with a very high degree of accurate direct fire at a considerable fast rate provides the main punch. It has the added fire power in the form of secondary armament. This fire power has been its forte from the very beginning and continues to remain so to the present times. The main gun is basically designed to engage the opposing tank by direct fire. Engagement of other type of targets are considered secondary.

The advent of anti tank guided missiles has reduced the primary role of the tank to a great degree. The ineffectiveness of shaped charge warheads against compound armour and consequent necessity of using kinetic energy ammunition for that purpose would, no doubt, partially restore the anti tank role of the main gun. In this role, tank gun would be one of the anti tank weaponry and not the core of anti tank defence. It should be remembered that the anti tank role is not the only use of its fire power. There are other tasks which its armament can carry out more effectively than any other weapon system. It has unmatched fire power and movement combination in the fighting zone. It has the capability to cover the target with accurate as well as prophylactic fire effectively. Therefore the evaluation of its fire power should be taken in totality of its capabilities and not mainly in the anti tank role. Viewed under this light, we need to analyse as to how best can this fire power be used for furtherance of operations.

## SHOCK EFFECT

Shock effect is a psychological phenomenon produced by appearance of tanks as invincible monsters causing havoc and destruction among the opponents. This effect gets enhanced when the armour appears at unexpected place, time and numbers with no effective counter measures available to the other side. Under such setting, the resultant shock effect tends to unnerve the opponent and create panic. Such was the case till about a decade ago. The situation is substantially different now. The vast range of anti tank weapons available at all echelons of combat has inculcated a strong sense of confidence among non-armour based troops in fighting the tank. It was amply manifested by ability of the Egyptian bridgehead not only to withstand the onslaught of the Israeli armour but inflict crushing attrition on them in their war in 1973. Realistic evaluation of tank threat and its coverage by adequate (stress is on quantity as well as effectiveness) anti tank weapons make opponent capable of dealing with tanks effectively with well placed confidence. In other words, the ingredients that went to produce the shock effect have been greatly

neutralised in the same manner as the rifle and machine gun neutralised the shock effect of the cavalry charge of old.

#### VALIDITY OF THE DOCTRINE

After the broad analysis of characteristics, it would be logical to examine the general validity of existing tactical doctrine.

An important of the employment of tank on the battlefield is its survivability. This, in turn, is dependent upon its armoured protection and degree of mobility. It has been seen that both of these characteristics have been diluted substantially. As a result, the reduction in the degree of its survivability has led to corresponding decrease in its tactical manoeuvrability and resultant domination of the battlefield. In other words, movement of tanks in combat has become too slow and cautious. On the present day battlefield, infantry, artillery, engineers and air effort to clear the anti tank impediments would be necessary before tanks can close with the enemy. This, in turn, would force armour to move at the infantry pace and where warranted, that of engineering effort. In those situations where only artillery and air action would be adequate to clear or neutralise the effective anti tank resistance, the movement of tanks could be more or less un-hampered. It would be an exception, all the same, where anti tank configuration would be such when those can be neutralised with air action and artillery by themselves. It can reasonably be assumed that the opponent would force employment of infantry and engineers for clearance of anti tank impediments.

#### TACTICAL EMPLOYMENT OF ARMOUR

It can be stated in unqualified terms that the armour would face superior fire power against it on the battlefield. The superiority of fire power has always and would continue to favour defence. It implies that the armour would be kept at bay by anti tank defences. Such situation in equally matched adversaries would lead to strong anti tank defences on both sides which would militate against the employment of tanks as tool for manoeuvre and achieving mobility on the battlefield. We are fast approaching the era of battlefield stalemate as far as armour is concerned. The situation would, of course, change should there be any technological development in enhancement of counter anti tank capability of the tank. For the future, alternatives would, no doubt, be found for the battlefield mobility. That aspect is beyond the scope of this subject.

It becomes clear that the armour would no longer be able to spearhead the break-in and dog-fight phases of offensive operations. When employed during these phases, its speed of operation would be that of (foot) infantry and engineers. The mechanised infantry has

no mounted role to play in these phases since their APCs/ICVs would be much more vulnerable to anti tank weaponry than tanks. Due to the long range of these weapons, the APCs would become vulnerable while still at considerable distance from the resistance holding up armour. Therefore, mechanised infantry would be forced to dismount further away from the opposition and carry out the operations virtually as infantry on foot.

The break-in and dog-fight operations would be characterised by closely coordinated, all arms (including air) efforts predominantly fought by infantry. Its main tasks would be to clear the passage for mechanised forces, under close support by fire power of all resources including armour.

The tank and mechanised infantry have the capability to play their dominant role in the exploitation of success achieved after break-in and in carrying out break-out after successful completion of the earlier two phases. Break-out and exploitation envisage development of operations towards a depth objective against light resistances while the opponent remains un-balanced. The anti tank weapons of today and to-morrow possess greater mobility than the tank. The helicopter weapons, artillery fired anti-armour munition, remotely laid minefields and tracked vehicle mounted anti tank missiles would be able to concentrate on suitable interception positions against the mechanised force well in time. Even the man-pack guided missiles can be landed by helicopters at suitable locations to intercept and engage the broken-out force. The build up of such anti tank resistance would be much faster than what has been feasible in the past. A situation of this nature and adequate magnitude clearly poses problems for the broken out mechanised force. In spite of the mobility and endurance of the armour to thrust deep, such deployment of anti tank resources would bring the exploitation or break-out to a halt, or least, slow it down considerably. Consequently, it would rob the break-out of its advantage of operating in the enemy's lightly held depth areas with speed. Further progress of operations would be possible only after the anti tank elements have been neutralised. For physical elimination of such resistance, it would again be the infantry's effort supported by all others arms which would clear the way.

The future battlefield environments therefore dictate that the armour would increasingly lose its dominant role in offensive actions. In almost every situation, employment of armour would mostly be for provision of fire support to the infantry against enemy's fortification and his armour. It leads to the emphasis that the tank should be considered primarily as a mobile source of direct fire power. This basic characteristic makes it the only weapon system that can provide close and intimate direct fire support to the attacking infantry. Without this measure of support, progress of operations

would be extremely slow and costly. The fighting would entail fire, fight and move by infantry-armour teams.

In defensive operations, armour would be best located within the defended areas from where they would present difficult targets to the attacking anti tank weapons. Their fire from hull down dispositions would be most effective against attacking enemy. Since the attacker's armour would have been tied in the fire support role by own defences, there would be no likelihood of outflanking move. Yet, the armour in defence would retain the option to move and engage in restoration of any adverse situation including counter penetration.

In the light of the pattern of fighting as visualised, our doctrine on employment of armour should emphasise the optimum utilisation of fire power of the tank. The reduction in its tactical mobility, perforce, will have to be accepted as the direct result of the modern battlefield environments. Flowing logically from it is the role in which tanks will be mostly used in supporting the infantry in fighting towards and on the objective. In fact, such support will have to be much more intimate and closely integrated than what is considered adequate at present. At the same time, it would be a mistake to conclude that there would be no situation where armour may be employed to carry out mobile offensive operations. There would be situations where opportunities would call for such employment. Another sphere of employment of armour is in the NBC environments. Under that setting, it would be the mechanised forces which will have the maximum degree of survivability after the NBC strikes.

#### CONCLUSION

In the future battlefields, stress would be to break the static environments and force some degree of mobility furtherance of operations. For this purpose, infantry, intimately supported by armour would play main part on the ground. Our tactical doctrines should therefore conform to the requirement of armour to operate in fire support role as its primary task. It would also entail reorganisation of mechanised formations.

A thought also needs to be given to the tank design. The priority should go over to fire power even at the cost of acceptable reduction in mobility. The tank fire power should have the capability of destruction of weapon emplacements, dispersed personnel and armour in that order. This would necessitate selection of right type of armament being provided to the tank. If necessary, diverse armament may be mounted on the tank. Going a step further, the very concept of main battle tank may be reviewed in the light of its changed role in future. Perhaps, there is a case for going back to the concept of specialised 'P', recon and cruiser tanks. It would appear as retrograde step but may lead to better employment of armour in different situations.

Another aspect which merits consideration is the feasibility of designing the tank gun to provide indirect fire support. Such indirect fire would be available and called for only in certain situations. Considering that the armour is likely to be employed increasingly in fire support role, this capability would be an added advantage. A regiment has the potential of providing equivalent of seven and a half artillery fire units—a substantial augmentation of fire power, specially in the initial stages of attack and defence when armour is generally held back. This modification in the design should be considered only if its provision would not effect the mobility and size adversely.

The modern battlefield scenario and some of the conclusions drawn may seem to be radical, specially in our own context. Yet, a deeper and objective consideration would justify such views. At the same time, the point needs to be borne in mind is that no fine line can be drawn when all constituents of modern anti tank weaponry would be available in sufficient numbers on the battlefield against armour. Of necessity, there would be a transitory period before the anti tank environments are formed as visualised. In this period, the tank would continue to play its dominating role, though on a fast decreasing rate. However, the pertinent point is that the availability of such anti tank weaponry exists which can confront the armour with superiority. The basic fact is that in any given area and environments, anti tank weapons can be deployed in greater number than the opposing armour, are more accurate, possess greater mobility and are far cheaper. It is a matter of evaluation and acquisition of right quality and quantity of such weapon system that would make the difference. We need to visualise the tank under fire of such weaponry and incorporate necessary changes in own doctrine. In a short and intense war, this aspect may well hold the key.

# Is Our Appraisal System Effective ?

LIEUT COLONEL A S NIRODI

*"Awareness of our limitation should make us chary of condemning those who make mistakes, but we condemn ourselves if we fail to recognise mistakes".*

—BH Liddell Hart

## INTRODUCTION

ONE of the most vital management function in the Armed Forces is the management of its officer Corps. Indeed, the efficiency and the professional ethos of the Armed Forces depends primarily on the quality and attitude of its officer Corps. In modern high intensity wars of short duration, success depends upon professionalism of the highest order, high ideals and the development of a strong corporate spirit among its leaders. Such an ethos can only obtain as a result of an adequate system of appraisal which assists in selection of officers for the appropriate jobs and identifying and promoting only those from whom the organisation gets best. Unless a sense of absolute justice prevails, talk of professionalism and motivation will only be a noisy babble.

The appraisal system attempts to place on record the data relating to the performance of every officer, as also the assessment of his potential. This data enables the Military Secretary's (MS) Branch to compare the relative performance of officers of the same seniority and rank to select the best for each of the jobs. This necessitates identifying such assessable qualities which satisfy the goals of the organisation. Advancement in career and job satisfaction occurs only in such cases when the officer displays essential qualities in a relatively higher degree; as assessed by the rater. Thus the integrity of the system depends entirely on two elements—the rating form and the objectivity of the rater. The objectivity and fairness determines the level of satisfaction as also the resultant attitude towards attainment of professional goals.

The appraisal system, in effect lays down the leadership guideline. Consequently, an officer will strive to understand and emulate actions and response pattern which will achieve his desire for success and

career fulfilment. Hence, the negative effects of an inadequate appraisal system can breed among officers, cautiousness, misplaced moral values, lack of moral courage, concern for self preservation rather than for the aspirations of the subordinates—the whole range of attitudes which nurture the seeds of inefficiency, insensitivity and self-centred attitude which cause lowering of traditional values. These can be disastrous in war and sickeningly inadequate in meeting the peace time requirements of the Army. These inadequacies are not prominently visible during the peace time, but surface when there is either a crisis of man management during peace, or, when failures of leadership lead to a series of disasters during war.

It is therefore essential, to analyse the present system of appraisal to examine whether it meets the needs of the organisation and what measures can be taken to boost its utility. To do that, it is proposed to analyse an ideal appraisal system, examine the lacunae in the present system and finally to recommend a revised mode of appraisal.

## AN IDEAL APPRAISAL SYSTEM

### QUALITIES

An ideal appraisal system in any organisation like the armed forces or in industry, aims at selection of personnel for suitable employment—in terms of job content and promotion—to optimise the development and efficiency of that organisation. This necessitates determining the qualities that need special emphasis in any environment. In industry and business, qualities which enhance profitability in terms of productivity are more important, whereas in the Armed Forces ability to function successfully in battle assumes the proportion of a crusade.

At junior level, upto the rank of a Lt Col, an officer is concerned with leading men personally. His efficiency depends greatly on his knowledge of men, weapons, motivating capability and personal example on a battle field. To be successful, he must master the art of commanding men and administering them in every detail; from maintenance of cohesiveness under fire to all the human needs on which depends morale. Besides an innovative mind, drive and determination, he must be an effective communicator to show his leadership abilities and courage where the proximity with troops ensures that nothing can be hidden. Moreover, his character and moral courage should be of highest order to earn the confidence and respect of the men he commands.

On the other hand, beyond the rank of a Lt Col, an officer moves into a wider field of management. Here, the qualities expected are

that of a manager of resources than leading men in its strict sense—qualities of influencing rather than of direct command gain importance. Many of the qualities needed for a junior officer are not directly relevant to an officer at the senior level. At senior level of command, ability to conceive, motivate, direct and implement ideas are vital. The successful senior leaders are those who can think clearly and carry out briefing concisely to already well motivated junior subordinates—not the ability for detailed supervision or being able to demonstrate tasks of the junior soldiers or commanders.

#### PERCEPTION OF TROOPS

While assessing the degree to which an officer is valuable to the Army, the most important aspect is often forgotten specially during peace time. And, that is, the extent to which officers are perceived by their troops as being professionally competent, concerned and caring, being close to their troops and able to take risks and initiative. These perceived qualities earn loyalty and willingness of subordinates to willingly lay down life, if required, in achieving the tasks laid down for a unit. Such qualities should find place in the assessment system. As no matter how highly rated is an officer by his superiors, if he is seen as lacking in these qualities by his troops, he will not be effective in battle though he may keep prospering in his career during peace time till the next battle.

#### EXPECTATIONS OF AN APPRAISAL SYSTEM

Each of the elements involved in the operation of the system place certain demands and expectations on the system which are briefly summarised below :-

- (a) The Army, as an organisation, expects its entire officer corps to be professionally competent, result oriented and dedicated. The MS Branch which manages the affairs of the officers as regards the career development, strives to evolve a system which will facilitate their task of job selection, job rotation and promotion. In this, they should ensure that the aspirations of the officers are not dampened in their efforts to evolve a system which provides data to make their task 'manageable'.
- (b) The officers in the channel of reporting, especially the Initiating Officers (IO), are directly affected by the type of system evolved. They have to inspire their officers to give their best, for achieving organisational goals, by guidance, inducement, motivation and even punishment in some form. Any pattern which influences the morale of his officers affects the performance of his organisation and in turn reflects the abilities of the IO. Hence, the IO has a stake in the type of report he pens. Thus, reporting pattern is linked ultimately with the personal relations which may lead to inflationary trend or subjective reporting.



(c) The officer reported upon comprehends that the organisation needs the best officers and that as the structure narrows at the top there is less space to hold all of his contemporaries. He accepts that he will be left behind at some stage. But till that happens he wants to be convinced that only the best have superseded him; and the system followed has been fair, objective, and that there are no inbuilt mysteries in the system. The officer strives hard to understand and follow actions within the system that bring about success and career fulfilment.

#### NORMS OF ASSESSMENT

While determining the qualities to be assessed and the system to be evolved, it should be kept in mind that the physical and mental stress undergone by leaders in the Armed Forces cannot be matched in any other profession. The officer is required to meet the challenge of performing a wide variety of conflicting roles; show initiative and at the same time remain within the bounds of a tightly centralised control; show moral courage by stating and adhering to his honest views and yet avoid being regarded as rigid; display integrity and moral courage and yet be loyal to his superior even if the latter is treading on a wrong path, or else run the risk of being framed on slightest of human lapses.

Thus, to ease the burden on the officers, while performing these conflicting roles, the qualities on which judgement is made, should be unambiguously worded and such, that the assessment can be given on each of the qualities based on certain specific aspects of performance or behaviour instead of arbitrary values or general impressions not based on facts. Additionally, it needs to be emphasised that an officer is too complex and an important element of the Armed Forces to be treated arbitrarily and assessed on 'general impressions'. In fact, it should be noted that, the behavioural science has not yet reached the level of development where an absolute unit of measures is available for appraising human behaviour. What can be done is to reduce and narrow down the element of vagueness and generalities.

While one is assessing another, certain amount of subjectivity is inevitable. Therefore, an ideal system should eliminate or reduce this chance by focusing attention on specifics in terms of achievements, failures, strengths and weaknesses. And, it should not be based on isolated incidents and performance immediately preceding writing of the report. The appraisal should have no bearing on the course reports, previous years performance or appointments held earlier but only on the performance during the period of assessment. Similarly, interpersonal relations should not affect appraisal, and an

Initiating Officer (IO) should be able to mentally carryout a surgical division of personal and professional differences with the officer reported upon. In fact there should be such a degree of communication that no ambiguities or variation in perception exist between the two.

#### RATING PATTERN

As to the rating scale, there is a need of a wider rating scale to facilitate a judicious discrimination of officers in the various degrees of competence and potential. It should not create saturation at average, above average and high average level.

The weightage to be given to the appraisal of Reviewing Officer (RO) and Senior Reviewing Officer (SRO) should be commensurate with the normal exposure of the officer reported upon. They should not be asked to rate an officer in every quality when they do not have adequate knowledge of the officer.

#### POTENTIAL

The potential can be judged from the officer's overall performance and assessment for promotion. Separate assessment is necessary on overall performance during the period and for promotion—as the two need not necessarily confirm with each other.

#### THE PRESENT SYSTEM AND THE LACUNAE

In our Army the system has undergone two changes; traits system replacing the earlier one primarily based on pen picture, and some other minor variations during the late 70s. In the subsequent paragraphs the shortcomings of this system are discussed.

The leadership traits in the present ACR form describe vague and abstract qualities with widely varied connotations and values. These lead to officer's understanding various imagined meanings into what is essentially a dense jungle of semantics. As concepts, when expressed in one word like 'decisiveness', 'integrity', 'loyalty', 'adaptability' and so on, are cases in point. It is also rarely possible to find leaders possessing all these traits in an uniform and adequate measures. If the psychologists who have evolved these terms were to sit and record their quantitative judgements on well known and successful leaders in strictly psychological terms, the possibility of any of these leaders measuring to an above average or average standards consistently in all these qualities is a remote possibility. This responsibility when entrusted to an untrained individual with inadequate scientific qualifications, results in highly subjective and lopsided

assessment which may not have any bearing on the real qualities of an officer.

Because of our religious tolerance of accepting life as it comes our Indian mind functions by the dictates of emotions rather than realities. Some of us are also influenced by castes, languages, regional affinities and allergies and regimental/corps loyalties. Many extraneous considerations of sociability and professionally irrelevant aspects get recognised as virtues. We also have confused ideas on integrity, moral courage, loyalty, flexibility and so on—some of which militate against each other. Unless one maintains a heavily contrived precarious balance, one can fall on the wrong side of the fence. For example, when one displays integrity and moral courage, he is most likely to create a doubt about his loyalty and so on. Therefore, one is always wary of what is expected and what aspect will debar one from promotion.

#### PERSONAL QUALITIES ASSESSED

The current form also falls short of expectations as it does not adequately emphasize on the qualities which affect the perception of troops about their officers that goes to make a unit battle effective. If officers are perceived as not caring for the aspirations of the troops, avoiding responsibilities, not taking initiative and risks as also curbing his subordinates from doing so, is most likely to be commanding a unit lacking in unit cohesiveness. This affects the efficiency of the unit and can be disastrous in battle. Such a leader undoubtedly is self seeking and has his career development radar beamed at his superior's desires with a very vulnerable shadow on the screen representing the perception of the troops. Needless to stress, that we see such type of leadership thriving in peace time. To aggravate the situation, the tenures in command and staff are so short that officers get by with superficial and what can be immediately visible, by neglecting the essentials and long term issues of building a battle winning outfit.

#### AVOIDANCE OF RISK TAKING

Consequently, this has led to a pathological reluctance to take risks for fear of failure. Thus, one is inclined to avoid all situations when one is likely to be assessed—like command of a battalion, which was a prized appointment once upon a time. Obviously this 'play safe' philosophy is highly dangerous in war. Reflecting this phobia, an appraiser avoids mentioning any weakness of the officer to avoid any harm to the officer reported upon. The system thus

encourages adoption of such impotent attitudes which are seen to bring success, promptly to be emulated and even excelled by others.

### RATING SYSTEM

In the present system, rating is obtained on each of the qualities in order to select officers for specific jobs, who possess certain qualities in a greater degree than the others. It is assumed that each of these qualities will be weighed independently to obtain an objective assessment of suitability of the officer for certain jobs. But what actually happens is exactly what is not intended. An assessor mentally determines whether the officer reported upon deserves to be promoted or not, and the type of appointment best suited to further his career. He determines the box grading that is necessary to ensure promotion and thereafter, proceeds to award numerical values on each of the qualities and aspects of the demonstrated performance. It is ensured that the numerical ratings match the box grading—for example, if the box grading is to be 8, then the rating will show more of 8s with a few 7s sprinkled around, or else all will be 8s.

This weakness in implementation results in faulty selection of officers for certain jobs. Besides, obtaining ratings on a nine point scale on each of these qualities becomes superfluous, as what seems to determine the rating is the overall box grading and recommendation for promotion.

### PEN PICTURE

Further, the 'pen picture' is at most a description of the officer's appearance and military bearing and a few generalised remarks. The penpicture, rarely makes any specific mention of professional achievements and shortcomings in the leadership qualities. Neither does this description assist the officer reported upon by way of professional counselling, nor the MS Branch.

### INFLATIONARY TREND

Another of our maladies is an inflationary trend. This trend in rating has prevailed for numerous well known reasons. Ironically, the spate of complaints from aggrieved officers asking for justice have also kept pace with the inflationary trend. Presently, out of the six brackets of below average (1), low average (2—3), average (4—5), high average (6—7), above average (8) and outstanding (9); 1—4 and 9 are rarely used, 5 is used more often, while there is a saturation in the region of 6, 7 and 8. It may be safe to assume that our rigorous and scientific method of selection at the Services Selection Board and the training at the pre-commission institutions discard all below average and low

average cadets, therefore, we are likely to have a very large number of officers who are average and above. Nevertheless, approximately over 50 percent in the brackets of above average (8) and nearly 30 percent in the high average (6—7) does create genuine problems of management of officers for promotion against limited vacancies, as the structure at the top narrows down.

#### RESTRICTIONS ON THE RATING PATTERN AND ITS EFFECTS

The main problem of the MS Branch arises in identifying the chaff from the grain. Purely based on the workload, it would be preferable to have more of chaff so that a manageable quantity of grain is available for distribution. Thus, in order to limit the number of officers within the manageable proportion, certain corrective measures are taken by imposing restrictions on the reporting pattern. Such restrictions would certainly solve the immediate problems, but create long term problems for all those who are affected. Necessarily, it creates unhealthy competition among the officer corps at middle and senior level to remain within the restricted quota and also increases the need for appeasing the superior. Thus, the problems already discussed in the preceding paragraphs multiply. As a result, most of the officers gravitate towards career patterns which offer least competition but gradual advancement with defused responsibilities. As also, anxiety at being penalised for failure curbs taking of bold initiative, which is certainly not a good foreboding for battle effectiveness.

#### ASSESSMENT WHILE ON STAFF OR INSTRUCTIONAL APPOINTMENTS

Presently, while the officer is on staff or on an instructional appointment, an IO and the RO is required to assess all qualities contained in the form. The study of the form will highlight the anomaly that many of the qualities and aspects of demonstrated performance are neither even remotely connected with staff work, nor is there any opportunity for the assessor to evaluate these qualities. Similarly, there seems to be no justification on seeking recommendations for promotion for command when the officer reported upon is serving and is assessed while on staff/instructional appointment. And, surprisingly we have continued with this form for all these years.

#### LACK OF CRITERIA FOR ASSESSMENT OF OFFICERS IN LIVE SITUATION

It must be admitted that there is bound to be a great variation in the kind of environment in which officers are assessed. Presently, a commanding officer of a battalion operationally deployed in a high altitude area has to deal with numerous live, day-to-day command functions of training, administration besides the

operational requirements. Moreover, the collective training exercises in these areas also have a bearing to the live situations oriented towards operational tasks and terrain. Assessment made in such a situation has far greater bearing to professional competence than an officer exercised in command at, say Bombay, Delhi, Calcutta or even a training formation located down South.

It might seem incongruous to equate the performance of these two types of officers at the time of their selection to the next rank, considering that in a large number of cases various well known means are at the disposal of officers in peace for display of what is superficial and transitory.

It is, nevertheless, valid to argue that one cannot choose to command the battalion in areas one desires. Surely, some means can be thought of to make command of a battalion in difficult areas more attractive. And also there is a need to provide a discrimination between the assessments in these two types of situations purely on the basis of relevance to realities.

#### ASSESSMENT BY THE REVIEWING OFFICER

Likewise, the RO who cannot be in direct and frequent contact, unlike an IO, is required to record his numerical assessment on each of the qualities in the form. Similarly, even if the RO is in chair even for one day at the end of the reporting year, he is required to assess the officer. This is preposterous and is an insult to the expected sensitivity of an organisation.

#### PERIOD OF PHYSICAL SERVICE : ICR/ACR

Presently, an ICR is initiated if both officers serve together for a minimum period of 180 days. However, such an ICR is set aside if an officer serves for more 90 days with the new IO during the end of the reporting period. For reasons not readily apparent, these last 90 days are considered sacrosanct and the ICR earned covering a longer period is not considered during the Promotion Board. The officer reported upon may have performed under considerable challenges and constraints during the period of the ICR and possibly may not have vibrated suitably with the new IO during the short spell of 90 days.

#### REDRESS OF GRIEVANCES

Finally, it brings us to the system of seeking redress on an unjust assessment by an aggrieved officer. Presently, the IO gives parawise comments on an officer's complaint. These are inevitably concurred by the RO and the SRO before being processed by the MS Branch. The comments made by the IO cannot be contested, even when these

are unjustified. There is no mandatory provision for interviewing an aggrieved officer by the IO, RO and SRO, when the misunderstandings could be squared, and might even result in the officer withdrawing his complaint. This means that, in a majority of cases the prerogative of the command is upheld *ex parte*. Redress is no doubt granted in some cases where the officers in the channel of reporting have known the aggrieved officer. Moreover, like in all spheres of activity any organisation looks upon a complaint as a challenge to the establishment and its authority and thus these are normally dealt with in an insensitive and impersonal manner by treating the complaint as one among many.

#### CREDIBILITY OF THE PRESENT SYSTEM

Further, the analysis of the present system brings out glaringly the shortcomings of the system which has many grey areas. It is only those who are successful who preach that the existing system is "most scientific and objective and by far the best". However, they do not apparently take into account the prevailing problems created on the one hand by an inflationary trend and on the other by a spate of statutory/non statutory complaints. These should indicate that the implementation of the appraisal system does not adequately meet the intended objectives and that there remains a communication gap at all stages which result in necessitating such complaints.

Therefore, in order to give concrete shape to the grey areas, create wider job satisfaction, establish faith in the system, assist the officers in the chain of reporting to channelise in objective reporting, and to facilitate and ease the task of the MS Branch, it is necessary to revamp the existing system of appraisal.

#### RECOMMENDED REVISED SYSTEM

The analysis of the ideal system and the lacunae in the present system have been taken into account while recommending the revised system. The new mode of counselling has been recommended to be introduced along with a revised form.

#### MODE OF COUNSELLING

In the present system there is no formalised mode of counselling or laying down specific objectives and self appraisal: measures which could reduce the communication gap between the officer reported upon and the raters. The revised mode of counselling attempts at removing this gap.

At the beginning of each reporting year, an IO must lay down clear and well defined performance objectives. He must give out his concepts on the organisation's objectives and his expectations in clear terms laying down certain standards to be achieved by sub units and individuals. And he must also explain his views on each of the character qualities.

Sometimes in the middle of the reporting year (say November for officers above 10 years service), the officer reported upon fills up 'Self Appraisal' in Part II of the form, and the IO fills up his assessment in Part III. The IO must discuss this report with the officer. The discussion across the table should be frank and candid where both explain their points of view. However, the IO will need to possess courage of conviction to discuss his assessment, thus establishing two way communication. This removes the apparent communication gap or contradictions in perceptions which prevail till the end of the reporting year, as at present. Besides this mid year event, the IO must counsel the officer on aspects which affect the performance whenever he notices the weaknesses. Similar discussion should also be conducted at the time of final reporting. This, combined with clearly defined goals, will ensure that the aspect of development and motivation of officers is introduced.

Although, both have to function in the same organisation, it is to be expected that this will result in sulking by some of the affected officers. However, this is likely to be a passing phase. In case an atmosphere of integrity prevails, eventually there will be an acceptance of reality.

#### REVISED FORM

The discussion that follows should be read in conjunction with the format of the ACR form, attached with this paper. As at present, Part I contains basic data except for two modifications; the data regarding the physical service is filled by the officer himself and an additional paragraph has been introduced to obtain data regarding the officers previous five postings and his choice of next posting giving five choices. While recording his choice the officer is required to confirm to the policy regarding the sector profile and variations in job exposure (to be issued by the MS Branch). This is a step towards enhancing job satisfaction which may consequently ease the burden of MS Branch.

#### SELF APPRAISAL

In Part II, 'Self Appraisal' has been newly introduced. Here the officer lists the objectives laid down by his superior and those laid



down by himself. He, thereafter, states his achievements, assessment on the degree of success and reasons why he could not meet the goals. The assessment is confined to the specific headings. This will enable an officer to highlight his achievements which in normal circumstances he may not advertise due to natural modesty. This serves as the basis for further assessment by the IO and RO. Moreover, self appraisal is a good therapeutic measure for self improvement.

#### PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL QUALITIES

Hereafter, the IO records his assessment on personal qualities and demonstrated performance in Part III. The questionnaire has been carefully prepared and consistently directs an IO's attention to the relevant qualities in specific terms. The qualities have relevance to professional aspects and encourage creativity and establishment of a committed and loyal officer corps imbued with a strong moral fibre.

The numerical rating on these qualities have been eliminated and replaced by four box gradings (relevant box to be tick marked). As examined earlier the numerical ratings on all leadership qualities are not generally correctly used, besides it is rather difficult to evaluate behaviour patterns accurately. Therefore, the assessment is confined to four gradations; No (has not demonstrated), Needs 'much' improvement, Needs 'some' improvement and 'Yes' (has displayed these qualities in adequate measure).

The IO should make a specific mention of the number of times counselling has been carried out and self appraisal discussed.

#### ACHIEVEMENTS AND SHORTCOMINGS

The 'Pen Picture' in the current form has been replaced by the IO's assessment of the officers' specific achievements and weaknesses with a focus on professional aspects and leadership traits.

The RO comes into play at this stage and comments on the assessment of the IO. The RO should comment only if he has knowledge and had the opportunity in witnessing major achievements or shortcomings of the officer on laid down goals.

#### OVERALL PERFORMANCE

Next, it brings us to the most important portion—the overall assessment, which causes inflationary trend. As IO and the RO record their numerical rating on the officer's overall performance in one of the sixth brackets from below average to 'outstanding'.

However, unlike the present limited rating scale from 2 to 9, a wider scale has been provided as follows :

	<i>Rating Scale</i>	<i>Band</i>
(a) Below average	0-3	3
(b) Low average	4-14	11
(c) Average	15-35	21
(d) High average	36-56	21
(e) Above average	57-67	11
(f) Outstanding	68-70	3

In the preceding paragraphs it was discussed that, normally there is a concentration of officers in the brackets of average, high average and above average. Therefore, the revised scale of rating provides a wider choice to the rater to grade more than one officer of the same rank in each of these brackets. This also assists the MS Branch to select the best from a merit list. Moreover, it neutralises the problem created by inflationary trend. In fact, even if the rating is shown to the officer, it is not likely to demoralise him, as, an officer rated, say 57 and another say 66, remain in the 'above average' bracket.

#### POTENTIAL OF AN OFFICER

In Part IV, potential of the officer is recorded on his promotion and type of appointments he is considered fit. It is considered that, an officer's performance in the present rank need not necessarily assure his fitness for the next rank. A numerical valuation has been introduced in addition to that on overall performance. Here again the rating scales are suitably prepared to provide a wider choice of marking. In case an officer is rated below 8 (promoted behind the contemporaries) and above 27 (promoted ahead of contemporaries), the IO and the RO need to justify these ratings by giving reasons. Thus the recommended rating scale on overall performance and for promotion will assist the Selection Board to progressively consider and accept officers of lower rating and gradations for promotion  $\leq$  fill up the existing vacancies.

#### SUITABILITY FOR JOBS AND LEVEL

In the second portion of Part IV, the IO, RO and the SRO give their recommendations on the type of staff/instructional/command appointment and also the level at which he is considered fit to be employed i.e., company, battalion, brigade, corps and so on. These recommendations should be endorsed after the raters have studied the qualitative requirements (QR) for each appointment. An officer

while on staff/instructional should not be recommended for command appointment, however, an officer in command appointment may be recommended for staff/instructional.

### COMPUTER INPUT

The form has been prepared in such a manner that the attention of the rater is focused on essentials to enable him to logically determine the potential of the officer in terms of a numerical value. The portion of assessment from Part II till Box F of Part III is only for the guidance of the officer reported upon and the assessor. The data to be fed into the computer and to be used by the MS Branch for job rotation and promotion is only the following :-

(a) Box G	—Overall Performance	—Part III
(b) Box H	—Potential for promotion	Part IV
(c) Box J	—Fitness for appointments	

The columns dealing with technical officers have not been included, as they could follow the existing pattern. Although this form pertains to the officers above 10 years service and upto the rank of Lt Col, a suitable form can be designed on a much smaller scale for officers below 10 years service and for Colonels and above.

### ASSESSMENT WHEN ON STAFF

This form caters for assessment on command as well as staff appointments, however, in Part III, qualities at serial 16 and 17 may not be applicable while the officer is serving on staff at higher HQ. In such cases, the assessment need not be recorded against these serials.

### ACCOUNTABILITY

It is admitted that, no system can assure absolute perfection or infallibility. The major responsibility lies on the enlightened assessors, and thus everything or something can go wrong during the implementation of the system. Therefore, it is necessary for the superior authority at every stage to monitor its implementation and ensure that the assessors are made accountable. The first stage has been ensured in the format in which the IO and the SRO are required to justify the abnormal ratings and the whole assessment has to be confined to the specifics. In the format, a continuous effort has been made to lead an assessor to determine the overall performance and the potential of an officer for promotion. The format also lends itself to facilitating identification of any reporting pattern which is inconsistent, subjective and where clever ruse has been employed to harm an officer by low rating, at the same time saying nothing adverse.

Besides this, the monitoring section at the MS Branch should return the inconsistent reports or seek clarification even though the officer reported upon has not represented. It should be considered a moral obligation by this Branch to ensure that full justice is done to every officer. And when such a credibility has been established that their interests are being looked after by an alert and a just organisation, there will be a sudden drop of complaints against the ACRs from the officers.

#### CORRECTION FACTOR BASED ON REPORTING TENDENCY

Similarly, the rating pattern of the IO, RO and the SRO can be computed. In case of too liberal or too miserly tendency, the correction factor could be applied for reports of Lt Cols and above, as by then, their assessors (Col/Brig) would have rated adequate number of reports to enable the MS Branch to determine the rating tendency.

The current practice of not giving consideration to an ICR if an ACR has been initiated needs to be corrected. The report which has been initiated covering a longer duration within the reporting year should be considered for the interim assessment prior to the Selection Board.

#### REDRESS

In case of complaints by the officers on their reports, it should be mandatory for the IO, RO and the SRO to interview the officer before commenting on his complaint. Similarly, a complaint should not be viewed as an irritant but should be processed in a positive manner, redress given where due, the officer responsible penalised for biased and inadequate assessment, and the aggrieved officer given protection against victimisation thereafter.

#### PRACTICABILITY OF THE REVISED PATTERN

It will be equally valid to argue against the practicability of any rating pattern, by saying that once the assessor knows the rating that brings success, he will tend to modify to suit this pattern. Thus, once again the MS Branch will have to battle with the problem of clustering in the higher rating brackets. Just to guard against this, the first step to be taken is to have a separate numerical scale for promotion, (not to be shown to the officer) in addition to the one for overall performance (to be shown to the officer). Second step is in-built in the revised system which will help encourage only those leaders who have highest degree of integrity and moral courage, with a total dedication to the profession and its goals and from whom one can expect an honest and objective assessment. Third, the reporting

officers are held accountable and are required to justify high/below average rating. The situation can be improved with concerted, energetic, sincere and convincing efforts from top down to change perceptions, attitudes and leadership techniques and actions which have contributed to the abuse of the system.

Though, this form caters for the needs of the Army, the format and the system could be adopted with certain variations to suit the needs of the Navy and the Air Force.

### CONCLUSION

The discussion in the preceding paragraphs takes us to the conclusion that the evaluation of the officer's performance and potential is one of the most vital aspects of assessment of effectiveness of an Army. The implications of inadequacies of the system, and more so the inability to detect, or refusal to believe existence of these, results in accumulation of adverse consequences, which are far more damaging in the long run than are presently perceived. Our system suffers from unrealistic inflationary ratings, resulting in saturation of a majority of the middle and senior rung of the officer corps at the higher spectrum. Were this trend to be confirmed by visible high standards of performance in enhanced battle effectiveness, unit cohesion and professionalism, the current system would not require a second look. On the other hand the existing high rating and also subjective reporting has resulted in the following problems :—

- (a) Promotion Boards are unable to select the genuinely effective officers.
- (b) Some are promoted who do not deserve to, had it been for an effective system.
- (c) Concurrently, a damaging effect, has been the knowledge that since a majority of deserving as well as underserving get a high rating due to an inflationary trend, a minor mistake can mean the effective end of a career.
- (d) This has made almost the entire officer corps over-cautious, more concerned with avoiding risks, mistakes and criticism than with enhancing the battle effectiveness of their units and commands.
- (e) The environment has resulted in suppression of healthy internal criticism. As, many have been wary of speaking out for fear of being branded as stubborn, inflexible, unadaptable and unable to accept the realities of the times.

Presumably, there are a few exceptions. But the system has also harmed a great many who are deserving. Such a system encourages some underserving who keep prospering in their career during the long intervening period between two wars or till discovered by a combination of circumstances. The high rank itself has a built-in-protection which can conceal error and reinforce self delusion which helps in maintaining an image of infallibility. Besides, those who have risen in higher rank are in a

position to frame policies and protect the system through which they have themselves succeeded. Moreover, higher the rank attained, more extensive damage can be wrought by such officers specially during a war, for an incompetent conduct by an operational commander may neutralise a decade or more of competent preparation for war, which would in turn endanger the Nation.

The system, which breeds and encourages careerist ethos creates environment oriented towards looking upwards at the superiors whims and fancies. Needless to emphasise that this is at the cost of focusing on attainment of unit's professional objectives and an essential downward orientation towards the human resources—the man who can make or mar the chances of achieving the unit goals.

Those who may call this as an alarmist statement would like to ruminate on the numerous shortcomings and lacunae in our systems of training and administration which positively do not enhance the battle effectiveness. To illustrate just one aspect is the matter of training. One can make a generalised statement to say that every one is aware of the harmful effects on battle readiness, of the numerous uncoordinated and short notice changes imposed by the higher HQ on a unit trying to train their men. The environment created is of a continuous need for improvisation, infinite varieties of unprofessional and needless activities during training when the units feel helpless in not being in control of its fate and pride. Everyone knows what it does to the unit's readiness for battle. One also knows that the performance of units cannot be judged in all its aspects during collective training exercises, and therefore is not an honest indicator of their battle effectiveness. And, knowing all this, one can neither see any improvement in the policies and nor any worth-while strong objection from the unit commanders who can declare that their units are not fit for battle and that they require more time to set expected standards. The outcome of such an honest statement by any unit commander can also be imagined.

Another argument often advanced is that the Armed forces are part of the Indian society and therefore cannot escape the continuing downward slide in socio-political environment where lower moral values are prevalent. It is also well known how the Indian society has come to accept with total apathy, these continuing lower standards as a natural phenomena. The primary objective of the Armed Forces should preclude us from taking shelter behind these socio-political trends in explaining any of our inadequacies on that account.

It is therefore necessary to determine how far should the environment within the Armed Forces match with the socio-political atmosphere within the country. The existing conditions outside if accepted in the Armed Forces, will create disastrous consequences. In the light of this thought, we need to curb selfishness, insensitivities and arbitrariness while dealing with the human resources, and attempt to evolve the systems that remove

the weaknesses. When officers witness that this honourable leadership style and behaviour brings success in the career, they would try to emulate this type of positive leadership pattern.

Notwithstanding the weaknesses in the contemporary situation discussed above, it is emphasised that these maladies are prevalent in the most of the large Armed Forces throughout the world and as yet a perfect system of appraisal has not been evolved. But the fact that there is an acceptance and awareness of these weaknesses which are debated, itself ensures that a serious thought is being given to continuously improve on the systems. The vital aspect of assessment of the officer's performance and potential need to be studied continuously. Numerous studies have been carried out to determine what qualities make a good leader. But what needs to be studied is; whether weaknesses in the moral character can be detected and judged; what caused, those who were 'high fliers' during initial period of service to be not selected later, was it personality clash, was it incompetence and low moral character of their superiors; what caused those assessed in the middle and lower spectrum of competence in the earlier part of service to supersede those who were always assessed as high profile officers; how can the all important, 'perception of troops' about their officers be judged by a superior; how to find out the gap between what is projected to the superior officer during his brief visits and the actual state of affairs within the command and so on. These issues when pragmatically scrutinised are likely to give some more positive vital clue which could further improve our assessment system.

The system recommended attempts at removing the anomalies and can bring about a high degree of objectivity and element of motivation. The introduction of self appraisal against clearly defined objectives, with a focus on professionally relevant qualities, are likely to enhance job satisfaction and thus overall efficiency. An effective implementation of the system will no doubt act as a catalyst to a greater degree of professional competence.

Finally, it is well to remember that the authoritarian organisations have a tendency to deny existence of any procedural weaknesses on the pretext that a particular system has 'stood the test of time'. However, this attitude is a most formidable stumbling block on the path of progress. In this context Liddle Hart remarks that, "Only one thing is more difficult than getting a new idea into the military mind, and that was getting an old idea out". This seems to be an occupational disease and therefore, we all need to be aware of its effect.

There is another argument often advanced, and that is to say that, whatever system one may evolve, it is not likely to succeed so far as the 'human factor' is involved. This despairing thought needs to be overcome. One needs to remember that change is essential for progress and optimism and an open mind can result in possible success.

**ANNUAL/INTERIM/SPECIAL/REVIEW/ADVERSE**  
**CONFIDENTIAL REPORT FOR THE PERIOD**

From \_\_\_\_\_ To \_\_\_\_\_

**PART I**

**PERSONAL DATA, SERVICE RECORD AND**  
**AUTHENTICATION DATA**

1. Personal No _____	2. Rank (a) Acting— (b) Substantive _____	3. Name— _____
4. (a) Regiment— (b) Unit — _____	5. Decorations and awards— _____	
6. Dates : (a) Birth— (b) Acting rank— _____	(b) Commission— (c) Substantive— _____	(c) Seniority— _____
7. Medical category _____	8. Qualifications : (a) Civil— (b) Professional— (c) Foreign languages— _____	
9. Marital status and the address of the Next of Kin— _____	10. _____	

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of the  
officer reported

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**11. Service record during the period of this report—**

Appointment	Date of assumption	Fmn/Unit	Period in months	Period of absence	
				Officer	IO

My physical service with the IO is.....days.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature of the officer reported upon)

**12. Choice of posting—**

Last five postings				My choice of next posting@	
Fmn/Unit	Appts	Period	Area*	Order of preference	Station
				I	
				II	
				III	
				IV	
				V	

Note : \* Use abbreviations—hard field (HF), high altitude (HAA), hard peace (HPc) and soft peace (SPc).

@ My choice confirms to the policy laid down as regards the sector profile. (MS Branch should lay down a policy which could be briefly described here)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of the offr reported upon

**CONFIDENTIAL**



CONFIDENTIALPART IISELF APPRAISAL

(For Future Development)

**A**

To be filled by the officer reported upon—

1. During the reporting year/interim period under review from.....  
to...../from 01 Jun.....to 31 May.....the following performance objectives were laid down for me.

	By my superior	By myself
(a) <i>Operational—</i>		
(b) <i>Training—</i>		
(c) <i>Administrative—</i>		
(d) <i>Any other—</i>		

2. I was able to fulfil those laid down objectives as under—(state very briefly your honest appraisal of achievements, inability to meet the goals and reasons for the shortcomings)

(a) *Operational*(b) *Training*(c) *Administrative*

(d) Any other contributions you have made towards professional development which you consider outstanding.

In your judgement what % of success have you achieved	
	%
	%
	%
	%

---

 Signature of the officer reported upon

Date.....

CONFIDENTIAL



**C**CONFIDENTIAL

Counselling by the IO —

1. How often have you counselled the officer during the period of this report (The counselling pertains to strong as well as weak points) Attach a copy of the letter indicating the weaknesses conveyed in writing if improvements were not made after your first counselling.

Twice	Thrice	Four Times	More

2. Have you discussed the self appraisal form and performance in Part II and III with the officer

In Nov (Middle of reporting year	During this report

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of the officer  
reported upon

Date.....

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of the IO

Date.....

**D**

Comments of the RO on Part II and III—only if in disagreement with assessment and in case of personal knowledge of specific aspects.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of the RO

Date.....

CONFIDENTIAL

**E**ASSESSMENT OF THE OFFICER'S PERFORMANCE BY THE IO

1. What did this officer do best during the reporting year ? (his achievements)

(a) *Professional.*

(b) *Training.*

(c) *Organisational.*

(d) *Any other*

2. His weaknesses and shortcomings were in the following areas—

(a) *Leadership Traits.*

(b) *Professional.*

(c) *Organisational.*

(d) *Any other.*

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of the officer  
reported upon

Date.....

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of the IO

Date.....

**F**CONFIDENTIALComments of the RO on assessment at **E** above—(see note at**C1** above—

Signature of the RO

Date .....

**G**PORTION HEREAFTER FOR COMPUTER INPUT

Enter numerical assessment of the officer's performance during the period :—

In my judgement this officer's performance of duty was—

	Outstanding	Above average	High average	Average	Low average	Below average
	68-70	57-67	36-56	15-35	4-14	0-3
IO						
RO						

or  
I do not have adequate knowledge of the officer

Tick, if so

Note—(a) RO should comment only if he has adequate knowledge or/and the officer has been adequately exposed to enable assessment.

(b) In case of below average and low average performance, the IO and RO must make specific recommendations as regards termination of services of the officer.

(c) Specific aspects of achievements and shortcomings which have led to this numerical assessment should have been mentioned in E above.

Signature of the  
officer

Date.....

Signature of the IO

Date .....

Signature of the RO

Date.....

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIALNOT TO BE SHOWN TO THE OFFICER

PART IV  
POTENTIAL OF THE OFFICER

<b>H</b>
----------

1. Having seen and assessed the performance of this officer and keeping the overall interest of the organisation in mind, I recommend that he be—

	Promoted ahead of his contemporaries	Promoted with contemporaries	Promoted behind his contemporaries (considered with the next batch on merit)	Not promoted
	28-30	8-27	2-7	0-1
IO				
RO				
SRO				

2. Explain the reasons if the rating is below 8 and the officer is recommended for promotion ahead of contemporaries giving outstanding matching achievements.

Signatures

Date

IO
----

RO
----

SRO
-----

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**J**CONFIDENTIAL

I consider this officer fit for the following appointments—(tick mark the box)

1. *Functions*

	Staff										Comd
	Ops'	Int	SD	WE	Trg	Q	A	EDP	Inter Service	Foreign	
IO											
RO											
SRO											

2. *Level.* (Staff appointment (S) and command (C) )

	Coy	Bn/equi- valent	Bde	Div	Corps	Comd	Area	Sub Area	Army HQ	Indep unit
	S	C	S	C	S	C	S	C	S	C
IO										
RO										
SRO										

*Note—* (a) While the assessment is based on the performance of the officer on staff/instructional, the recommendations for the appointment in the next rank should be on staff/instructional and not command. However, recommendations for higher rank in command as well as on staff/instructional will be given while the officers have been assessed in their duties in command.

(b) Recommendations should be based on the 'qualitative requirements' issued by the MS Branch. (MS Branch should issue this as a booklet)

Signatures : IO : ..... RO : ..... SRO : .....

Date : .....  
.....CONFIDENTIAL

# Restoration of Bayonets To The Engineers

MAJOR K. R. SINGH

## INTRODUCTION

A bright Sunday afternoon found the legendary 2/Lt Clueless sitting under a tree, outside the mess, gently sipping beer from a foaming tankard. He was by himself, could see the sappers of the field company slouching in the distant heat, and felt lost. His sixth sense told him that there was something wrong with his platoon. His platoon, that he had personally trained upto a razor sharp edge of combat efficiency. He had been reading the papers; something about maintaining standards—the ISI conducting rigorous tests to maintain them. He could sense that a change had taken place in the unit. It had slackened imperceptibly in all things; and then the thought struck him—a flash—the explanation was there. This had happened because the bayonets had been withdrawn and sent back to the ordnance a week back. They had been withdrawn.

2/Lt Clueless was right. The change would be more accentuated as times went by. A closer study would be warranted; demanding voices would be raised, probing questions would be asked, and we hope; constructive action taken to remedy this mistake. Let us delve into the study of the withdrawal of bayonets from the engineers and the far reaching implications of this step.

## WHY WERE THE BAYONETS WITHDRAWN ?

The bayonets were withdrawn in the beginning of 1965. The question as to why were they withdrawn has never been answered upto now. The following could have been the 'plausible' reasons used at that time.

- (a) Statistics of the last umpteen number of wars, fought with modern fire arms, to show that a very few casualties were attributed to the bayonet.
- (b) That it would cause a reduction in weight (one pound one ounce in the bolt action rifle) to be carried by a sapper.



- (c) That it would effect a saving of Rs 12 per sapper so disarmed.
- (d) That the same bayonets could be issued to the BSF (Border Security Force) and other para-military organisations that may have been short of this item.

### WHY ARE BAYONETS NEEDED ?

The bayonet is essential to soldiering. A soldier is closely associated with the bayonet from the beginning of his training. To misquote 'He lives by the bayonet, and if need arises, saves himself by it'.

### MOTIVATION AND PSYCHOLOGICAL VALUE

A high rate of motivation in soldiers springs from two sources :

- (a) *External.* like privileges, facilities, and status bestowed by the civilian population in times of war.
- (b) *Internal conditioning* of a new soldier into a life of military regimentation and war both culturally and psychologically.

Under the internal sources the conditioning of a soldier involves imbibing new militarist cultural values in him to replace his earlier values. The most important such (new) values to be imparted are :—

- (a) *Learning to kill other human beings* in combat and managing with the sense of guilt associated with such action and;
- (b) *Learning to react to danger* with positive instantaneous action rather than fear.

Bayonet fighting goes a long way in building these two qualities enumerated above. It has no substitute for building the fearless killer instinct in a soldier. It teaches him to react instantaneously, in an aggressive manner and spirit, to danger.

The guilt feelings referred to above are both anticipatory and real. When anticipatory it causes hesitation in striking the enemy particularly in close quarter combat, with possibly fatal consequences to himself. When real it may cripple the soldiers' mind. (An example of the latter being the case of the pilots who dropped the atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki).

Man, since the dawn of history, has been fighting with one another using weapons of close combat. He has a dormant desire to kill with a weapon requiring physical contact with the enemy. This desire is only evoked when the sinister blackened bayonets are fixed. It raises the morale of the soldier and he realises that he is in the final stage of the battle, ready to kill the 'dushman' or be killed.

Fixing the bayonet raises the resolution to fight to the last. It is more potent than the religious or regimental battle cry or the shouting of profane abuses at the enemy.

Fixing bayonets brings home the final truth that, it is then onwards, a question of kill or be killed. Soldiers of our neighbours hostile to us are afraid to close in with the bayonet. This gives us an added advantage.

#### TACTICAL VALUE

The engineers are an arm and as such come in close contact with the enemy in various operations of war, at various stages where the bayonet will be necessary.

*Defence.* Engineers are meant to hold ground, participate in reconnaissances close to the enemy and are generally strung out in small detachments for engineer tasks like water supply and road/track maintenance. They are, at such times, open to attack by enemy in all these circumstances particularly in desert, mountain and jungle terrain where infiltration and raids by the enemy are eminent.

*Raids and Special Missions.* Engineer personnel taking part in these must have bayonets; which have a reasonable chance of being used. Silent attacks on isolated sentries would also involve the use of the bayonet as a dagger.

*Withdrawal.* Engineers deployed on reserve demolitions or road denial tasks could well be engaged by the onrushing enemy if there is a delay or mishap in firing the demolition. This would require the use of all weapons including the bayonet.

*Offensive Operations.* Many opportunities arise when the bayonets come in handy as improvised prodgers for dealing with mines. During the fluid stages of such operations in the desert, where outflanking moves are the order of the day, all troops have to be prepared to defend themselves against such moves. More so, as distances and gaps between bodies of troops are large. As such the bayonet becomes essential as a weapon of close combat.

*Close Quarter Battle.* When firing may cause casualties to our own persons, becomes an arena for fierce bayonet fights. No other weapon can take its place at such times.

#### RELIABILITY

The bayonet is an absolutely fool proof weapon and will never jam or misfire as any other weapon can. This reliability is even more

important as all small arms these days are either automatic or semi-automatic.

Both the world wars saw all the armies of the world armed with the bayonet. It was not discarded by any one.

The communist block countries particularly Russia and China have gone a step further in their new advanced version of the AK 47 Assault carbine (7.62 mm); They have a permanently fixed and folded bayonet which can easily be flicked open for use.

The reliable bayonet instills fear in the enemy ranks when they approach closer. It will only be a very well trained and motivated enemy who will close in to the bayonet fighting range.

#### VALUE AS A TRAINING AID

The bayonet is one of the most useful training device invented. Bayonet fighting (practice) brings about the following changes in a recruit/trained soldier :-

- (a) *Physical fitness* is enhanced with a marked increase in strength, agility and balance.
- (b) *Mental hardening* in preparing the soldier to face the prospect of killing the enemy. This fact is rehearsed in his mind. It instills ruthlessness, anger and an ability to take up the challenge of close quarter combat when the need arises.
- (c) *Soldierly Bearing*. A person who trains daily with the bayonet has an entirely different gait altogether. He strides the world with confidence and with pride in being a soldier.

#### CONCLUSION

Much water has flowed down the Ganges since the bayonets were withdrawn from the engineers. Even some of the reasons for their withdrawal have ceased to exist. Their withdrawal, instead of doing any good has harmed the engineer, in his training, his outlook and his self esteem. His physical mental and psychological well being has suffered. Their reintroduction is, therefore, a necessity if we wish to preserve the engineers as an arm capable of fulfilling their role in its entirety. Alternately we may divide the engineers into combat and works and issue bayonets to the former. This is the only compromise possible—no other.

# The Committed Soldier

BRIGADIER N B GRANT (RETD)

EVER since the publication of the Third Pay Commission report, a controversy has been raging in the country, regarding the various attributes of the "generalist" and the "specialist" for executive appointments in the Government, whether this be in the field of public industry, the civil services or even the armed forces. However, recent frequent reshuffles and new appointments in the top ranks of the Public Sector Undertakings, the Indian Administrative Services, the Indian Police Service, and in the three Services of the Armed Forces, a controversy has since started in respect of a new category of government servant, namely, the 'ideologist', more commonly referred to as "committed".

Thus, this has brought to a sharp focus, the kind of commitment that is expected from any government servant in the normal conduct of his duty. In this, the single question asked is, whether for a society to be free, can any officer of the government abdicate his moral responsibility to think for himself, when official duty demands that he remains fully committed to the policy of the government in power. On the other hand, the counter question asked is, can any semblance of ordered administration be possible, if everyone starts deciding thing based on his own personal beliefs. The aim of this paper is to analyse this in its applicability to government services in general, and to the Armed Forces in particular.

## THE CONCEPT OF COMMITMENT

About 2 years ago, while addressing the heads of the public sector undertakings, the Prime Minister had observed—

"All these years we have taken up important programme publicly, but we have put at the head of these undertakings men who were not fully involved, but thought it was only another job. We cannot simply afford that sort of attitude".

It appears that the Prime Minister desired that, all those who were concerned with any sort of public services should be "deeply involved, deeply committed". Wrongly or rightly, those views had at that time given rise to yet another controversy, because it was thought that the

government desired to politicize all its services. On this issue the question which has since been raised in many quarters, is with regard to the basic concept of the desirability of government services getting involved or committed to any form of political ideology. In this respect, it has been argued that, in our type of democracy which has been fashioned after the style of the British and American pattern, it is essential that the Civil Services in general, and the Armed Forces in particular, stay completely aloof, and do not get themselves involved in any way in the political ideology of the government in power.

Upto now, the concept has always been that, whereas the civil servant was committed to the high principles of public good as embodied in the Constitution and to the Directive Principles of State Policy, namely, promotion of justice—social, economic and political, the soldier's commitment has always been as interpreted in terms of Lord Chetwode's inscription at the IMA, namely, that he is committed first to the security and welfare of his country, committed next to the security and welfare of his men, and committed last to his own security and interest. It will be noticed that, no mention has been made anywhere of his commitment to the government in power.

Although the above concept appeared to have worked well under a colonial domination, and was aptly suited to the purely professional aspect of the Services, the question arises, whether under the present environment in the country emphasising social justice in its true sense, is it possible for any government servant, civil or military, to remain divorced from the political ideology of the government in power ?

#### COMMITMENT OF THE DIFFERENT POLITICAL SYSTEMS

The above problem becomes more complex in a developing country like India than in a developed country like USA or Britain. In the latter countries, their industrial revolution preceded their political aspirations, and, therefore, everything was geared towards higher production, and productivity and professional efficiency was the hall mark of the Services. In those countries therefore, political ideology took a very low priority in comparison to the other facets of its national life. In our country however, possibly due to circumstances beyond our control, the opposite has happened, in that, our political awakening preceded our industrial rejuvenation, with the result that right from the start, political/ideology has dominated and taken priority over such 'mundane' professional activities like higher production and administrative efficiency. This trend is still continuing, and if anything, the ideological aspect is gaining more prominence over the purely professional considerations.

This being the case, the question arises, whether the professional civil servant or for that matter the professional soldier, can afford to still stay aloof, or should he get himself absorbed and become a part of that ideology. To do otherwise would mean being at conflict with the socio-economic climate of the country, and which must ultimately affect in a lowering of his professional effectiveness. On the other hand, swimming with the existing ideological current, would mean being at variance with certain professional and administrative traditions to which the Indian civil servant and the soldier have been wedded to. In the communist countries like Russia and China, it is incumbent for the civil servant and the soldier to be thoroughly indoctrinated and be imbibed with the party ideology. On the other hand, whereas the civil servant as well as the soldier in democratic countries like Britain and America, is wedded to loyalty to a specific person or institution, without these being related to the ideology of the government in power, in our country we have left this beautifully vague. For example, whereas the loyalty of the soldier in UK is to the Queen, and in the USA to the Constitution, the jawan in our country swear allegiance to a generic term, namely, the Country, and not to any specific aspect of it. The crux of the matter however is, that neither one or the other system in UK and USA has had any adverse effect on the professional skill of the individual or the administrative efficiency of the organisation. Unfortunately in our country, we have been caught between these two extremes, resulting in some misunderstanding and to a certain extent lack of faith, between the government and its services. What is then the answer?

#### THE DEGREE OF COMMITMENT

Depending on the degree of commitment or opposition to a particular ideology, all executives whether they be in the civil service or the armed forces, can be divided into the following categories—

##### (a) *Crusaders*

Hundred per cent committed, and ready to stake everything including life and livelihood, for the sake of success of ideology or policy.

##### (b) *Sympathisers*

Generally believe in the ideology or policy but may have some reservations. Also not willing to take extra-ordinary risks. May at times even prefer to conceal their faith.

##### (c) *Neutrals*

Have no ideological axe to grind. Willing to do any job assigned to the best of their ability to make their own career. Successful mainly in respect to power and money.

##### (d) *Conscientious Objectors*

Have no faith in the ideology but would prefer to do jobs selectively. May create difficulties at times by withholding efforts, but would desist from wrecking efforts of others.

(e) *Antagonists*

Openly opposed to the ideology. Would attempt to secure rejection of the ideology in preference to the alternative one, but such efforts are constitutional.

(f) *Saboteurs*

Deadly opposed to the ideology. May express interest and even participate in programmes outwardly with a view to sabotaging.

Whether it be a civil servant or a soldier, democracy presupposes only such citizens, who make a comparative study of ideologies of different political parties, and support one on the basis of convictions formed. It is a great irony that, our school and college curriculums both in the military and the civil (except those of economics and political science) do not include detailed study of principal ideologies, resulting in 'educated' people remaining 'uneducated' in this vital sphere.

### CONCLUSION

Let's face it, whether the civil servant or the soldier likes it or not, the political system and its ideologies have now become a part and parcel of his daily living and the environment in which he works. It has permeated into almost all facts of his professional and cultural life, and he can no longer pretend to remain outside this system and yet be effective as he has managed to do so in the past.

In this respect however, it can be stated, that—

(a) full commitment to the ideology of the government in power is not a necessary qualification either for a civil servant or the soldier;

(b) any party or its government would, and there is no reason whatsoever why they should not, scrupulously bar entry of antagonists and saboteurs to the high offices, whether it be in the civil or the military, and avoid conscientious objectors as far as possible;

(c) in the type of multi-party democracy adopted by us, 'neutrals' should still be preferable, though other things being equal, 'sympathisers' would do better.

It is realised that, the above concepts may disturb a hornet's nest. However, by now it must also be apparent that, the Services, both civil and military, are today in the midst of this nest which has already been disturbed. If in future they do not wish to be stung, they will have to learn to live with the particular ideology and be 'committed' to it. Whether today the Services are mentally prepared to accept this, is a different matter. In the ultimate analysis, it is the legal conundrum which will decide as to which authority a person faced with conflict of duty should obey. In this respect, for the future, it would be essential for the Centre to give clear cut directions, failing which, the existing traditional duty to which the soldier has so far been committed to, will be suspect.

# The Military History of the "Habash" In India From A. D. 1200

LIEUT GENERAL S L MENEZES

VISITS in the past to Janjira on the Konkan Coast, and Ahmadnagar in Maharashtra had aroused my interest as to the role of the 'Habash' (Abyssinians, Eritreans and Somalis) in India. Recent residence in Bengal had revived this interest. After the impact of the Arab, Persian and Turki invasions of India, Africa was now being tapped more than ever as a source of slaves, much in demand in Arabia from pre-Muslim times. Numbers of slaves were procured both from the coast-lands as well as the interior, and sold in Arabia and Egypt, and from these countries they were passed on to the newly-Islamized peoples of Iran and Central Asia. The Central Asian Turks, after they were established in Asia Minor and in Byzantium, continued to have their preference for slaves from Africa. They were liked for their simplicity, their faithfulness, as well as ruthlessness when they were trained.

These slaves fell into two not always clearly distinguishable categories of (1) the Africans proper, and (2) the Habash. This latter name goes back to a Semitic tribal name, the South Arabian Habashat. This was the name of one of the South Arabian tribes which crossed over and settled in Ethiopia and the Horn of Africa. From the Arabic form, we have the name adopted into the Persian and Indian languages as noun Habash, adjective Habshi. Both categories, willingly or by force, leaving their country and finding themselves in the Arab and other Muslim worlds of Iran, Central Asia and India far away from their homes, through circumstances accepted Islam. They were often sold as common slaves by Arab slavers, and whether coming through the Red Sea ports, or overland to Egypt adopted the Muslim religion as a matter of course.

Some Habash found their way into India from the time of the first Turki conquerors of North India, who were established in Delhi as rulers of the Turki Slave Dynasty from the beginning of the thirteenth century A.D. The first real conquerors of North India from



the Muslim world were Turanian, or Central Asian Turki, in origin—Turkis from Central Asia who were established then in what is now Afghanistan. The Arab episode in Sind, which started when Sind was conquered in A.D. 712 by Muhammad bin Qasim on behalf of the Omayyad Caliph of Damascus, did not endure for more than 50 years, after which Persian adventurers took possession of Sind. In the meanwhile, the Turki rulers of Afghanistan, Mahmud of Ghazni and the Ghoris, led plundering raids against the Punjab and the interior of India, ultimately leading to the annexation of the Punjab to the Ghaznavid empire by Mahmud of Ghazni. Finally, we have the defeat and slaying of Prithviraj Chauhan, the last Hindu King of Delhi and Ajmer, by Sabuk-tagin Muhammad Ghori at the Second Battle of Tarain in A.D. 1192.

The permanent establishment of a Turki Muslim line of kings, who gradually brought the greater part of Northern India under the sway of the Turkis, took place in 1203, when Qutbuddin Aibak became Sultan of Delhi. The country as conquered by the Turkis was really ruled by the Turki military leaders. After Qutbuddin Aibak, the head of the Turki State was Shamsuddin Iltutmish or Altamash (A.D. 1206-1236), and he was succeeded by his daughter, Razia (Raziyya, A.D. 1236-1240). Queen Razia was not liked by the Turki warlords because she was a woman who assumed the role of a male ruler as a king, and came out in public. Her attempts at ruling with a firm hand were resented by her own people, the Turki chiefs and noblemen, and the chief of the Forty Personal Slaves and Associates of Iltutmish. This was aggravated by the fact that Queen Razia showed in public special favours to a Habash, whom she raised to the position of "Master of the Stables or Horses" (Amin-i-Adhur), who appeared to be intimately connected with her in her personal life like helping her to mount her horse by lifting her up bodily. We have thus evidence of an Habash—evidently from the coastland of the Horn of Africa coming to India and acquiring a position of importance among the ruling class of then newly-established Turki Muslim state in Delhi. This Habash, whose name was Jalaluddin (or Jamaluddin) Yaqut, was looked upon with aversion by the Turkis, and they thoroughly disliked him as the favourite of Razia. His colour must have been one of the main reasons. The Turki leaders rebelled openly against Razia, and she was defeated, and her favourite the Master of Horse was killed. Razia in an astute move married one of the rebel chiefs named Malik Altuniya of Bhatinda, but this did not in the long run help her—both her husband and she were defeated and killed by her foes. This was the first recorded incident in which an Habash had taken a prominent part in the India of that time.

The Habash were found in good number in Delhi for some centuries after this. From the evidence of the Arab traveller from Maghrab or North-West Africa, Ibn Batuta, in the middle of the fourteenth century, we have information on the presence and importance of these Habash as mercenaries both in the Indian mainland and in Indian waters. They were coming to India—Southern and Western India (the Deccan)—by sea from the Horn of Africa from the time of the establishment of Muslim States in the Deccan and South India in the fourteenth century. Under the protection of the Arab traders, possibly as their clients, these Islamized Habash were arriving even before. According to the late National Scholar, Suniti Kumar Chatterji, there is in the sculptures in the Orissan temple of the Sun-god at Konarak a bas-relief of long-robed Arab traders (with Habash among them, it may be) bringing, as a present for the local Hindu King of Orissa, a giraffe as a curiosity. Horses from Arabia and Persia for the armies of the Indian Kings, both Hindu and Muslim, formed a very common item of trade which the Arabs and Habash used to bring, along with other articles.

In the great Muslim Bahmani kingdom built up and maintained mainly by Muslim Indians from North India in the Deccan (1347-1518), armies of Habash who came through the Western India ports, used to be recruited. Number of them in the fourteenth-fifteenth centuries shifted from Bengal and North India where they had come earlier. They were employed along with the Uzbeg and other Tatar or Central Asian Turki-speaking mercenaries; and both the groups were known as Mamluks, or 'Owned Slaves'. They were found in large numbers, and they served their employers in fighting against the South Indian Hindu State of Vijayanagar and the Hindu States in the North like Orissa.

Between 1518 and 1526, the vast Bahmani empire was split up into the five Muhammadan States of Bijapur, Ahmadnagar, Golconda, Bidar and Berar (all of these were by the end of the seventeenth century gradually conquered and absorbed into the Mughal Empire). This disruption of the Bahmani Empire had begun earlier, before the formal split in 1526. Some of these new states were carved out of the Bahmani Empire by Muslim leaders of foreign origin, others by Hindus converted to Islam. The Adil Shahi Dynasty of Bijapur was started by a Turki adventurer from Istanbul (born in A.D. 1489), said to be of the family of the Sultan of the Ottoman Empire. The Nizam Shahi Dynasty of Ahmadnagar was founded by Ahmad, a Brahmin convert (born in A.D. 1490), and it was consolidated by Brahmin ministers and officers. The Quli Qutb Shahi House of

Golconda was set up by a Turkmen soldier from Central Asia (born in A.D. 1512), whose family intermarried with Telugu Hindus. The Imad Shahis of Berar were of converted Hindu origin, Fathullah, the founder being born in A.D. 1484. The Barid Shahis of Bidar were Muslims of Indian origin (the founder Kasim was born in A.D. 1498).

The Habash were to be found in the army and civil services in all these states, but in Ahmadnagar they were more important. Ahang (or Nehang) Khan was the Abyssinian chief of a small state feudatory to Ahmadnagar, A.D. 1586, when Emperor Akbar was seeking to conquer Ahmadnagar. Ahang Khan joined the heroic warrior queen of Ahmadnagar, Chand Bibi, or Chand Sultana, but later on he went against Chand Sultana and besieged and defeated her. Through revolt among her troops, Chand Sultana was surrounded by insurgents and murdered. Ahang Khan continued to be an important figure in the state but retired into obscurity after the state was annexed to the Mughal Empire in 1637. Malik Ambar, another Habash, became a distinguished Minister of Ahmadnagar during the time of Emperor Jehangir. The Habash in the state joined the Hindus in resisting the Mughals and their Muslim and Rajput allies, when Jehangir sought to conquer Ahmadnagar. The king of the state was a young man, and his Minister was an Habash, Malik Ambar (who was originally a slave sold at Baghdad). He carried on the administration with great efficiency. In 1612 the Mughals captured Ahmadnagar, but Malik Ambar who was a good soldier fought on, defeated the Mughals and recaptured the city of Ahmadnagar, taking advantage of dissension among the Mughal generals. He introduced into Ahmadnagar the revenue system of Todar Mall, the Finance Minister of Emperor Akbar, and he also founded the city later known as Aurangabad. Malik Ambar was known both as a soldier and as an administrator. He joined Shah Jahan in his revolt against his father, Jehangir. Malik Ambar died at the age of 80, in 1628. Malik Ambar's son, Fath Ali Khan, became Minister, but he murdered his master the king and had finally to surrender to the king of Bijapur.

There were other prominent Habash who took a leading part in affairs of the Deccan states in the sixteenth-eighteenth centuries. The Habash were there in their thousands to take sides in any political struggle. The mother of the Ahmadnagar Sultan, Ibrahim Nizam Shah (1594), was a Habash, queen of his father, Burhan Shah. Contemporary with Ahang Khan and Malik, Ambar, in Ahmadnagar and Bijapur, were a number of prominent Habash, like Yakut Khudawand Khan and his sons, Shahzadah Khan and Ghalib Khan, who made themselves men of authority, in the state of Bidar during the

first quarter of the sixteenth century; Malik Yakut Sultani, a leader of the Habash, in the state of Khandesh under the Furrukhi Kings; Ikhlas Khan, Hamid Khan and Dilwar Khan, contemporaries of Chand Sultana in Ahmadnagar; and a number of other Habash with their men in Bijapur State, besides others elsewhere.

The Habash also took part in the affairs of Bengal during the second half of the fifteenth century. They had been introduced into the court of the Muslim Sultans of Bengal. The Bengal Sultan Raqududdin Barbak (A.D. 1459-1474), son of Sultan Nasiruddin Mahmud I (1442-1459), is said to have imported into his court an army of Habash. He was engaged in wars with Orissa and Kamrup (Assam), as well as fighting in Chittagong, which was variously under the Buddhist Maghs or Arakan Burmese. These Habash, favoured by the king, grew in power during the reigns of Sultan Ruqududdin Barbak's two successors, Shamsuddin Yusuf (1473-1481) and Jalaluddin Fath (1481-1487). The Habash, as a sort of Praetorian guard, now became a problem, and a menace to the stability of the state. They became oppressive to the people, and controlled the palace and the city. The people who resented their oppression colluded with the chief eunuch of the palace, the Khwaja-Sera Sultan Shahzadah, and with the support of the Bengali foot-soldiers, Sultan Shahzadah succeeded in murdering the King Jalauddin Fath. The loyal Habshi commander of the forces, Amir-ul-umara Malik Andil (or Andiyal), was away in a campaign, and this enabled Sultan Shahzadah to put himself in power in this way.

Then started a period of domination and rule by Habash over Bengal, for six years, from A.D. 1487 to 1493. With the help of Habash, and Bengali paiks or foot soldiers, Sultan Shahzadah, after murdering his master, made himself king under the name of Sultan Barbak. Malik Andil, the loyal Habash was biding his time to avenge his master's murder, and very soon he succeeded in killing Barbak.

Malik Andil offered to place Jalaluddin Fath's infant son on the throne, but the dignitaries and the people, beginning with the widow of Jalauddin Fath (she had feelings of gratitude for the avenger of her husband's murder) prevailed upon Malik Andil to ascend the throne. He did so, assuming the name of Sharfuddin Firuz. He ruled for three years from 1487 to 1490.

In the dark annals of dominance by Habash in Bengal, Firuz's reign alone provides some relief. He is credited with having ruled justly. His reputation as a soldier inspired respect; his attachment

to the Ilyas Shahi house made the people forget his race. His kindness evoked warm praise from historians (*History of Bengal*, Vol II, edited by Sir Jadunath Sarkar, University of Dacca, 1948). He appears to have been murdered by the turbulent Bengali foot soldiers who now became the king-makers.

The next king Nasiruddin Mahmud II (1490-1491) is believed to have been a son of Jalaluddin Fath. He was under a tutor appointed by Malik Andil, also an Habash like himself, Habsh Khan. He acted as regent to the new king. But Habsh Khan was killed by another Habash, Sidi Badr, nicknamed Diwana or 'the Madman', who assumed regentship, and very soon secretly despatched the boy king, and placed himself on the throne as Shamsuddin Muzaffar (Sidi Badr Diwana), who ruled for two years (1491-1493). His rule was a veritable reign of terror, and inevitably there was a conspiracy headed by his wazir, Sayyad Hussain. Ultimately Sidi Badr shut himself with a few thousand of his mercenaries in the citadel, where he was beleaguered for some months, and was killed when he came out on a sally.

Thus ended the era of the Habash (1487-1493) in Bengal. Sayyad Hussain, of Arab origin, became the next king of Bengal as Alauddin Shah (1493-1519), and a stable period was ushered in. The Habash were expelled from Bengal, and they drifted to other parts of India, including Deccan.

The Habash—including people of Ethiopia, Eritrea, Somalia, and adjacent areas—who came to India through the centuries and took part in its affairs and lived on here, gradually became Indians. The Habash formed part of the naval forces of the various independent states of India from the seventeenth century; and whether in hostile or friendly relationship with the Maratha and other navies in the Arabian Sea, they were eager to defend the Indian coast from the Portuguese and other Europeans.

The Habash, who were also known under the respectful soubriquet of Sidis or 'Masters' (from the Arabic Saidi, 'my lord'), carved out for themselves a little state on the Konkan coast, that of Janjira, about 40 miles to the south of Bombay. It was a state of 326 sq. miles with a population of about 110,000. It was founded by a Sidi captain, whose people were for generations admirals of the Muslim states of Bijapur and Ahmadnagar, from the first quarter of the sixteenth century. The ruler was referred to as of the 'Habshi race' and had the title of Nawab. The state was also known as Habsan. It

came under the direct rule of the British in 1870. After India's Independence, Janjira was abolished as a feudatory state, and was merged into the State of Bombay (now Maharashtra) as an integral part of India in the year 1948. This last survival of this physical connexion with India of the Habash of Africa became a thing of the past, and like the Habash in India, their last centre in India also became a part of India. The Habash in India gave to India two great names—Malik Andil of Bengal (A.D. 1490) and Malik Ambar of Ahmadnagar (A.D. 1615). The Habash are now only found in the western areas of India—Maharashtra and Gujarat—mostly as working classes. They retain their separate social existence, and remnants of their speech.

## A Gifted Military Officer and Writer-James Moncrieff Grierson

P. C. CHAUDHURY

IT is said a great military officer does not die, he fades away. But some do leave their footprints on history by their deeds and writings. We offer a sketch of one of them.

James Moncrieff Grierson (1859-1914) who had rendered distinguished military service had worked in India in his early years. He was a born and gifted writer. Educated at Glasgow Academy in Germany, and at the Royal Military College, Woolwich, whence he passed out fourth, he joined the Royal Artillery at Aldershot in 1878. Soon after he began to write military articles for the Press. He was deputed with the Austrian armies in the occupation of Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1879. In 1880 he went to the Russian manoeuvres at Warsaw and acted as the correspondent of the *Daily News*. In 1881 he joined the Battery in India and was an attache at Q.M.G's department in Simla. Though employed on intelligence work he was a regular contributor to the *Pioneer*. At Simla he had time and energy to compile a *Gazetteer of Egypt*, a volume of excellent notes on the Turkish army and an Arabic Vocabulary. A confirmed bachelor and a good mixer at the club he was the despair of young ladies.

He accompanied the Indian division sent to Egypt in 1882 as the Dy. Asstt. Q. M. G. to take part in the operations against Arabi Pasha. He saw the battles of Kassassin and Tel-el-Kabir and was mentioned in the despatches winning the Khedive's star and the fifth class of the order of the Medjidie. In 1883 he came back to India and sent to the Staff College, Camberley and passed first from the Staff College. He was detailed out to the Sudan Campaign and saw the battles of Hashin and Tamai and again earned references in the despatches.

His pen was busy in spite of his exacting military duty. At the Staff College he completed translating Grodekoff's Campaign in Turcomania and passed out with Honours in French and Russian. For some time he served in the Russian Section of the Intelligence Division under General (Sir) Henry Brackenbury.

In 1886 promoted as a Captain he returned to India and became the Dy. Asstt. Q.M.G. first at Lucknow, and then at Peshawar. He had joined the Hazara expedition in 1888 and won a medal and meritorious mention.

Brackenbury had appreciated Grierson and got him back to the Intelligence Division as the head of the Russian Section. His services were invaluable as antagonism, between England and Russia in Asia was then growing and Anglo-German relations became closer. Grierson with his suave manners and intimate knowledge of Germany was a frequent guest of the Emperor and of German officers. During these years he produced for remarkable books :- *The Armed Strength of Russia* (1886), *The Armed Strength of Japan* (1886), *The Armed Strength of the German Empire* (1888), and *the Staff Duties in the field* (1891). The books show his keen appreciation of the problems and marshalling of facts. He used to recoup his jaded brain by indulging in music and study.

Though an admirer of Germany he could discern that a breach with England must come sooner or later. He had given vent to his feelings to his superiors and was appreciated, a rare appreciation.

When Lord Roberts took over as the Chief in Command of the British forces in the South African War, Grierson was variously utilised in field service and he received the Queen's medal and four clasps. In 1900 he was deployed to China as the British representative on the staff of field Marshal Count Von Waldersee. C-in-C of the Allied forces against the Boxers. Grierson entered Peking with the C-in-C. His liaison work between the British and the Germans was great though he was getting disillusioned of the German modalities of Warfare. Inspite of his feelings he mixed very well with the German dignitaries.

Coming back to England in 1901 he saw service as the Chief Staff Officer and was promoted as Major General and posted to be the Director of Military Operations.

His next two years were actively spent contributing to the foundation and cementing of British friendship with France. He had the gift for such delicate mission. He was detailed out to France and was as cordially received as he had been in Germany. Grierson and Col. Hugnet, the Military Attache in London were able to lay the foundation of this friendship. From 1906 to 1910 Grierson held the command of the first Division at Aldershot.

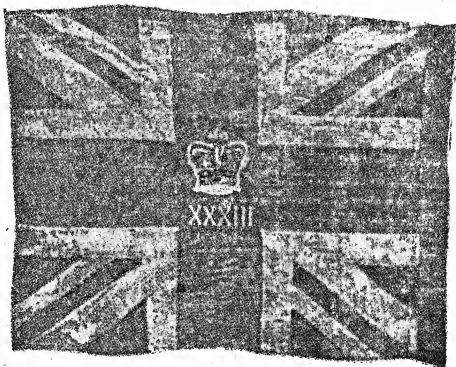


Grierson's versatile capacity was recognised as he was sent to Siam (1911) and then to accompany the official tour of Prince Henry of Prussia (1911). After this he was given the exacting job of the General Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Eastern Command. He devoted himself to train the troupes for field warfare and organised repidity of mobilization. This was needed as the War clouds with Germany foreseen years before were thickly gathering. It had been decided that he would be made the Chief of the General Staff of a British expeditionary force if the War with Germany had come off in July 1911 because of the Agadir crisis. But this did not take place.

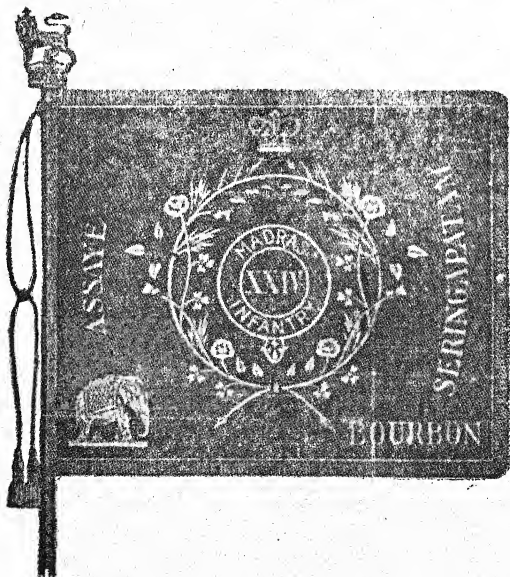
In 1914, when War was declared Grierson was appointed to command the Second Army Corps and he left for France. Destiny had ordained he should only land in France. Reaching Havre on 16th August, he was in train when he suddenly expired the next day of aneurism of heart. His grave is in Glasgow.

A great military officer who combined a rare insight into men and matters and which he could put to effective language, Grierson made his mark and some of his books are treated as pioneers on the subject. He wrote in 1914 "I would rather command a battalion in War than be C. G. S". He was an amateur actor, a good musician, fond of travel and society. His habits helped him to be a creative writer. He was created a K.C.B. and holder of many other decorations. He lived for his profession. It is a pity he did not write on India.

It is wondered how many of the military officers now have read D. S. Macdiarmid's book on this man.



Queen's Colour, 33rd Bengal N. I., c. 1876



Regimental Colour (1893) of the 24th Madras Infantry

## Colours—King's and Regimental

LIEUT COLONEL J. R. DANIEL (RETD)

A Colour is nothing but the flag or family badge of a clan or tribe hoisted on a pole to indicate the position of its leader in a camp or on the battlefield. That is how it used to be till the end of the last century, especially in European countries. It was a point of honour for the loyal followers of the leader to rally round the Colour on the battlefield when pressed hard by the enemy; and they often died proudly in the defence of its honour and the noble cause it represented.

On the Indian battlefield, the elephant also served the purpose of the Colour. Throughout the battle, the king sat on the tallest elephant so as to be visible to his warriors. In the midst of the battle they kept looking off and on at the elephant, and if the king was not to be seen they turned about and fled from the battlefield, thinking that everything was lost. (1)

When fighting units progressed into well-organized Battalions, and Battalions came to be grouped into regular Regiments, it was customary for a King (or Queen) to present a Colour to a Battalion for its valour in battle. The King (or Queen) personally presented the original Colour and the Royal or First Colour was known as 'The King's (or Queen's) Colour'. The get-up of the King's Colour was simple: the design of the Union Jack covered the entire flag and formed its background, and superimposed on it were the number of the Battalion and its Battle Honours.

If a Colour had no space left on it for the addition of subsequent Battle Honours won, or if the original Royal Colour was lost or damaged, another Colour was presented to the Battalion. This Second Colour was known as a 'Regimental Colour', and on it were the Regimental motifs and devices as approved by the Inspector of Colours. There was one condition to be fulfilled by European Regiments—the Union Jack in reduced size was to be given pride of place at the two inner corner of the flag. This stipulation was not applicable to Native Regiments, but the 7th Infantry, Oudh Irregular Force, for instance, had all the same a small Union Jack on its flag in 1856.

(1) R. J. Minney, 'Clive' (Manchester, 1931), p 53.

Each Regiment of the British East India Company and the King's own forces in India (2) had thus two types of Colours—the King's Colour and the Regimental Colour(s). These Colours were carried into battle for inspiration as in the past. During the Boer War it was found that long-range weapons inflicted innumerable casualties among troops exposed on the battlefield, and that concealment was essential for survival. The practice of carrying the colourful Colours to the battle zone was therefore discontinued. To Sir George Colley belongs the honour of having carried it for the last time on 26 January 1881.

The Colours were, however, retained by the Battalions for display on ceremonial occasions as a symbol of honour. They were trooped for the public to see and the troops to view it with pride and remind themselves of the past glory they symbolized. When merely brought out on certain occasions but not trooped, they were displayed on a stand, and a 'Stand' later on came to mean two or more Colours. (3)

Whereas it was an honour for a Battalion to be presented with a Colour, its forfeiture was ordered in some cases as a form of collective punishment for its misdeeds. In 1718, for instance, one Battalion was disbanded with ignominy when its men mutinied, and all its Colours were officially burnt as a mark of disgrace.

In 1824, the whole or part of three Battalions in a garrison mutinied when ordered overseas for service in Burma. Some of the men of two of the Battalions rushed into the Quarter Guard, and seizing the Colours, burnt them. The implicated men were tried by General Court Martial, and five of them sentenced to death. As for the third Battalion, which also misbehaved, but not to the extent of dishonouring the Colours, it was disbanded. However, as only a few men were actively involved in indiscipline in one of the Battalions, its burnt Colours were restored by the presentation of duplicates at a later date.

In another case, a Battalion was deprived of its Colours because of gross indiscipline. But in the following year, when the Regiment made up by rendering signal service in dealing with the tribes of Northern Sind, the Colours were restored to the Battalion.

When a Battalion ceased to exist, normally its Colours were taken over by the Colonel of the Regiment for safe custody and

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(2) Battalions were often referred to as Regiments then—JRD.

(3) Capt H. Bullock (Indian Army), 'Indian Infantry Colours' (Times of India Press, Bombay, 1931), P 22.

preservation. In India, they were usually sent to some arsenal for safe custody. In the case of the 37th Madras Native Infantry, an illustrious unit disbanded in 1882 as part of a national policy of reduction, its Commanding Officer, Col HCZ Claridge, was specially permitted to retain its Colours in his personal custody in London. He issued instructions that on his death, the Colours should be interred with him. Accordingly, when he died in 1899, in deference to his wish, his funeral was delayed till the Colours could be brought from London and buried with him at Ryde in the Isle of Wight. Part of the inscription on the monument read, 'The old Colours of which Regiment, presented to him on retirement, lie enclosed in this tomb.' (4)

In the case of the 17th Madras Native Infantry, disbanded in 1903 under the designation '77th Moplah Rifles,' the Colours were destroyed in 1923 in an accidental fire which consumed St. Mark's Church, Bangalore, where they had been stored. (5)

Thus, Colours had their own vicissitudes. They were presented for distinguished service, or taken away for misdemeanour, or restored for penitent behaviour or when lost for reasons beyond control. So venerated were they that people were prepared to die for them, or considered it an honour to be buried with them.

When India became a Republic in 1950, the King's and the Regimental Colours of the past lost their significance. They had to be laid up somewhere as sacred relics so as to make room for new Colours to be presented by the President of India. Accordingly, 35 Colours of the Indian Army and Navy were laid up in Chetwode Hall of the Military College, Dehra Dun, on 23 November 1950, and 17 State Force Colours on 6 April 1956. .

Thereafter, as soon as Regiments finalized the pattern of their Regimental Colours, Colours were presented to their Regimental Centres and their Battalions. The first Colour Presentation to any Regiment or Corps is made in person by the President, and subsequent Presentations to newly-raised units are done by the Army Chief acting on behalf of the Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces.

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(4) Indian Infantry Colours, *ibid* : p 32.

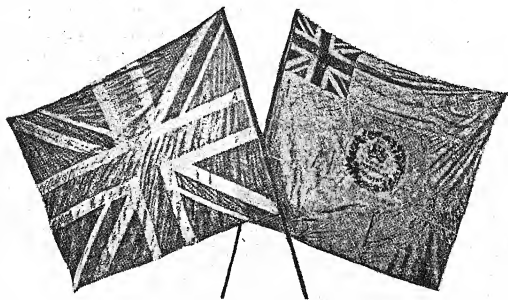
(5) Indian Infantry Colours, *ibid* : p 89.

It is now customary for Infantry Regiments to carry two Colours—the National Flag and the Regimental Colour—on ceremonial parades such as Attestation Parades, National Day Parades, and the like.

As an epitome of the past glory, the Colours, which still carry ten of the pre-Independence Battle Honours on their silken fabric, continue to inspire troops to emulate the valour of their forebears and exhort them to loyalty and gallantry in the service of the nation and the Regiment or Corps.

"A moth-eaten rag on a worm-eaten pole,  
It does not look likely to stir a man's soul :  
'tis the deeds that were done 'neath the moth-eaten rag,  
When the pole was the staff, and the rag was a flag".

—Edward Hamley



Colours of the 7th Infantry, Oudh Irregular Force, c. 1856.

# Secretary's Notes

## ELECTIONS TO THE COUNCIL

As a result of the elections to the Council for 1983-85 the following twelve have been elected, names being given in alphabetical order :—

1. Brig NB Grant, AVSM (Retd.),
2. Maj Gen MC Gupta, PVSM (Retd.),
3. Lt Gen Harbakhsh Singh, VrC (Retd.),
4. Air Commodore Jasjit Singh, AVSM, VrC, VM,
5. Lt Gen K Mahipat Sinhji,
6. Lt Gen SP Malhotra, PVSM (Retd.),
7. Lt Gen SL Menezes, PVSM, SC (Retd.),
8. Vice Admiral MK Roy, PVSM, AVSM,
9. Lt Gen AM Sethna, PVSM, AVSM (Retd.),
10. Maj Gen SC Sinha, PVSM (Retd.),
11. Vice Admiral RH Tehliani, PVSM, AVSM,
12. Lt Gen AM Vohra, PVSM (Retd.)

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—Technical Staff College Course (TSC) Entrance Examination, held in Oct every year	1 Apr
—Part 'D' Promotion Examination, to be held in Feb every year	15 Jun
—Part 'B' Promotion Examination, to be held in Jul every year	10 Jan
—DSSC Air Force Entrance Examination, held in Feb every year	20 Jul

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